D.NO.3517

e 1941

filmindia

Editor BABURAO PATEL

G T Annas

NOTHING COULD PART THEM FROM EACH OTHER!

NOTHING COULD BREAK THEIR FRIENDSHIP! .... NOTHING COULD BREAK THEIR IDEAL NEIGHBOURLY TIES!

BUT .. A SIMPLE SENTENCE DID ALL THE MISCHIEF!

MADE POSSIBLE THE IMPOSSIBLE! IT WROUGHT DESTRUCTION ON TWO LOVING NEIGHBOURS & A WHOLE PEACEFUL VILLAGE.....!

MEET THESE NEIGHBOURS IN **PRABHAT'S**

PADOSI

(Hindi) — SHEJARI — (Marathi)

Directed by **SHANTARAM**

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IN ITS **5th Month** AT **CENTRAL** (BOMBAY)

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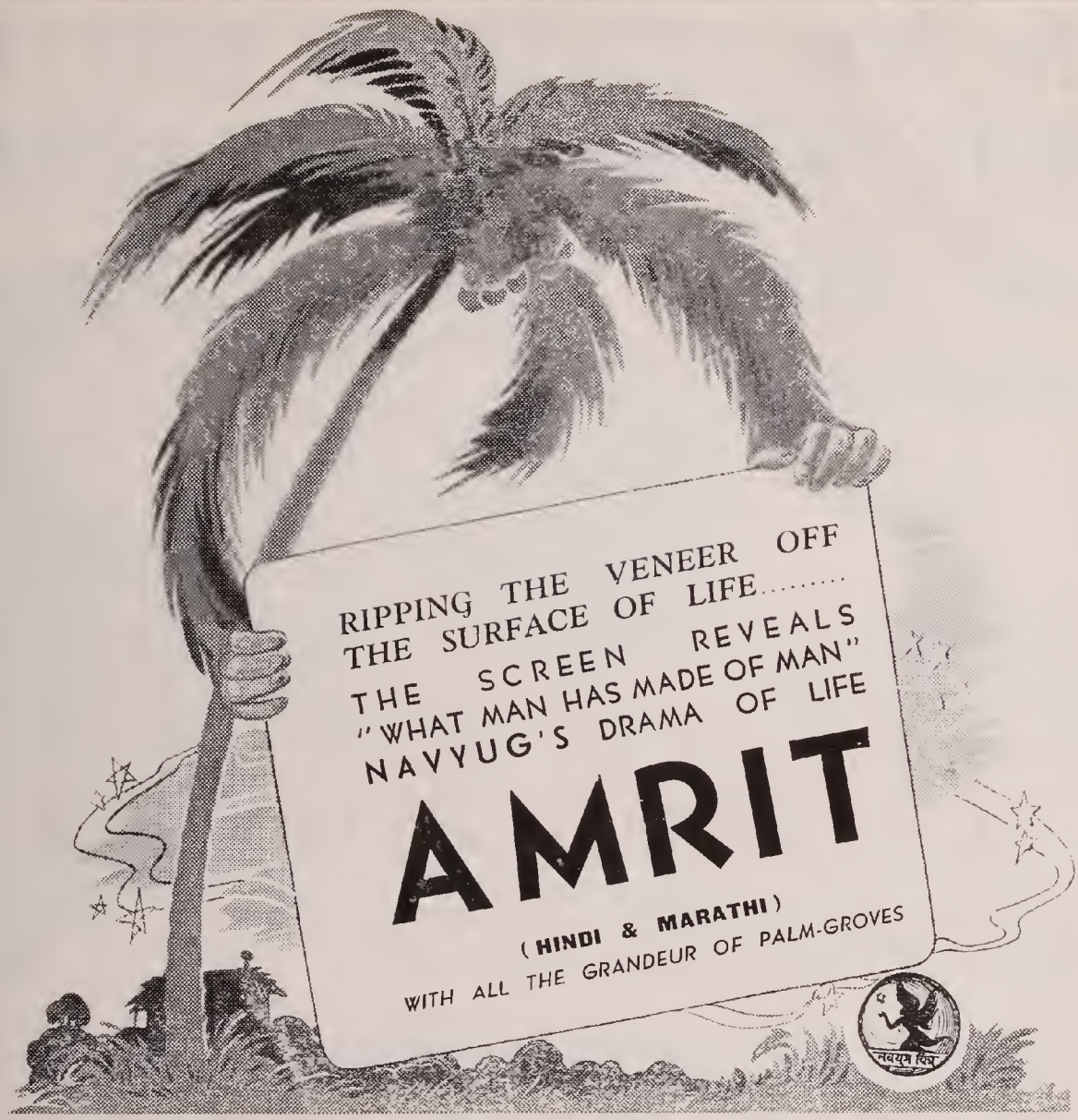

- *Story :* V. S. Khandekar
- *Direction :* Winayak
- *Camera:* Pandurang Naik

Starring **Meenaxee, Lalita Pawar, Baby Devi, Baburao Pendharkar, Salvi, Damuanna Malwankar, Master Vithal and Winayak.**

AWAITING RELEASE AT **CENTRAL CINEMA** (BOMBAY).

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Editor: **BABURAO PATEL**

VOL. 7 NO. 6
JUNE, 1941

Monopoly Rackets In Jaipur, Bhopal, Bikaner and Gondal and "Prince" Keki Mody

MAKING films in India does not seem to be a very happy business just at present. The producers have to face almost innumerable outside difficulties apart from the intrinsic ones in the production business.

The Government of India takes its pound of flesh in exhorbitant duties on raw films, machinery, chemicals and almost all things needed for the technical equipment of the industry. This bad job, the Government does most efficiently without the least bother about knowing how the film industry is faring. Add to this the inevitable income-tax, super-tax and the excess-profit-tax. And it would not be far from the truth to state that people in the industry are working merely to keep the Government going.

On the other hand when leaders of the industry rush to the Government with one grievance or another, and there are many such grievances, the Government unblushingly sympathises with the plight of the industry, but does nothing to ameliorate the conditions under which the industry is trying to make a headway.

To make matters worse, several district authorities, collectors and commissioners inflict their own penalties in the shape of recensoring fees and octroi duties on the already heavily-taxed film industry. It all seems like a well-organized conspiracy to rob the industry of all its profits, thus stopping the producers from reinvesting to stabilise the film industry in the country.

Reports come to us that one more nuisance has now cropped up to stay the future progress of the Indian films.

In the Indian States of Jaipur, Bhopal, Bikaner and Gondal, their respective ruling princes have granted theatre monopolies to individuals with the result that legitimate competition and expansion are denied to our film industry.

It is hardly necessary to trace the reasons of these monopolies. They might, as usual, be found in unfair favouritism or shabby nepotism or even illegal exploitation. The fact remains that these monopolies are badly throttling the interests of Indian films by choking off competition.

In Jaipur, with a population of over 1,50,000 we are informed, that one Radha Kishan Chamaria has secured the monopoly of the entire town and has erected a theatre called the Manprakash Talkies, where only old and rotten pictures are shown usually and the good ones which rarely go there, reach after over two years after their first release in Bombay and usually in rotten and unplayable condition. Sound reproduction in this theatre is reported to be awful and other conditions in the theatre are understood to be equally bad.

The theatre owner, protected by his monopoly, gives ultimatums to the producers and the distributors all over the country and is reported to be taking films at ridiculously low hires and making about five times the money on them. Is this honest business? What is the underlying morality that prompts a state to grant such a monopoly which encourages this type of racketeering?

Are we in 1941 under the democratic British flag, under which we are all supposed to have free trade, free movement and free speech? His Highness Maharajadhiraj Shri Sawai Sir Man Singhji Bahadur, G.C.I.E., who has been to Europe four times, can certainly appreciate the benefits of free trade and healthy competition which alone guarantee the industrial progress of a State.

Monopoly, which is at best a relic of an unprincipled feudalism, ruins all prospects of industrial progress and in addition invites a question on the sanity of the ruler. For, surely, a ruler who grants such stupid monopolies, and in 1941, must certainly be a mad guy, as by doing so, he is denying to his people increased prosperity and greater opportunities.

More or less the same state of affairs exists in the States of Bhopal, Bikaner and Gondal.

Bhopal with a population of over 61,000 has only one monopoly theatre; Bikaner with a population of over 85,000 has also one monopoly theatre and so has Gondal with a population of 24,000.

And strangely enough all these princes make a lot of noise about fighting for freedom and draw a lot of limelight on themselves as knights-errant of democracy in the present war, while they deny to their own people the elementary right of free trade and natural expansion.

While Jaipur, Bhopal and Bikaner need at least two cinemas more, Gondal can easily accommodate one more cinema. In any case, this practice of granting monopolies to individuals must be immediately discontinued if we are ever to call these principalities as progressive states and their princes as democratic rulers.

In fashion with the monopoly practice observed in these states, a new "prince" has cropped up in Exhibitor Keki Mody of the Western India Theatres. He has gone out to Ahmednagar and secured all the three theatres there, viz., 'Sarosh', 'Mohan', and 'Krishna' and with an air of "the lord of all I survey", he is reported to have begun his game of dictating.

While no one wishes ill to Keki Mody and while all wish him luck with his business expansion schemes, it is rather unfortunate that such expansion should result in monopolies.

Monopoly is a distasteful thing in the present times and it will never pay the producers and the distributors to encourage individuals to monopolise release stations in this way, whatever may be the legitimate reasons for doing so.

One way of stopping this monopoly racket, by states or by individuals, is to refuse to give them pictures, good or bad, till the monopoly is shattered.

Producers will do well to listen to this now, before it is too late.

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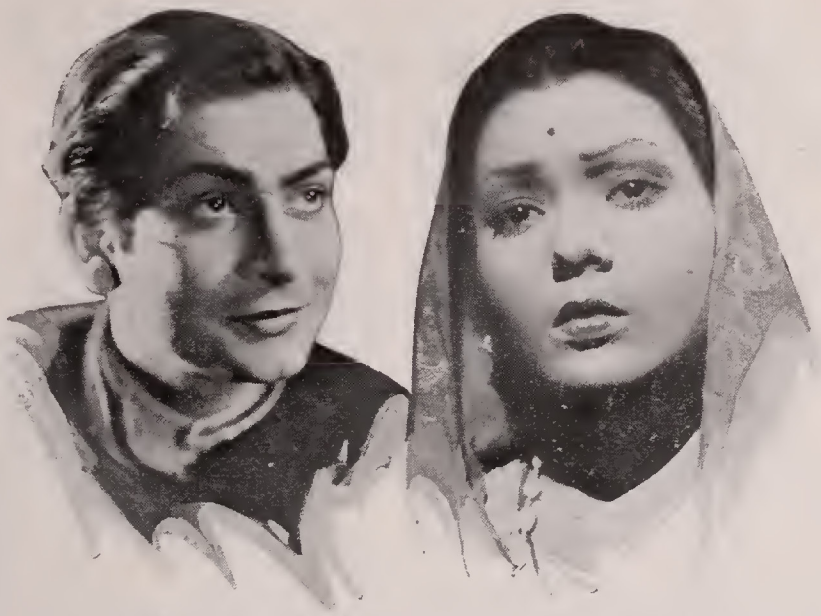

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Bombay Calling

This section is the monopoly of "JUDAS" and he writes what he likes and about things which he likes. The views expressed here are not necessarily ours, but still they carry weight because they are written by a man who knows his job.

HULLO ! ALEX SHAW !

Alexander Shaw was appointed as an expert on the Film Advisory Board on the 22nd October 1940. Seven months have passed since then but not one picture of his, I beg your pardon—a documentary to put it in his own words—has yet come out.

Alex Shaw has himself drawn over Rs. 13 000/- during the time and the Board must have spent over Rs. 1,25 000 on the organization and the production. And yet we seem to have been denied the pleasure of seeing even one film produced by this expert.

A useful friend tells us that two shorts called "The Sappers And Miners" and "The Cavalry of The Clouds" are, sort of, ready but either they are too bad to be released or they are not yet quite ready.

What ever is the truth behind the scenes, one would like to know whether those films will be released before the end of the war.

If the activities of the Film Advisory Board are intended to contribute to our war effort, isn't it necessary that these short films should be produced quickly and released as quickly, one after another, to make our country more war minded? Or are they waiting for the war to come to India and time the release of the first Shaw film with the explosion of the first bomb near the Metro Cinema?

Alex Shaw doesn't seem to be much of an expert to have been in the country for seven months and not have done anything yet. Or is this Shaw's appointment also made as Douglas Reed of "The Times" describes in his book, "Disgrace Abounding."

"In England under democracy, you do not put experts in charge of your affairs, but distribute your favours among men of a small class without especial qualification for the post they receive. This is the misuse of democracy in the interest of a class, the betrayal of democracy, and it is the cause of our woes, past, present and to come. The enthusiasm, the energy and the ability are there, but you do not use them, you delude and misuse them?"

We only hope, purely in our own interests, that Alex Shaw does not turn out to be an "expert" from this class.

THE HOT-HOUSE EROS

The other day I went to see "Virginia", a Technicolor production of Paramount at the Eros Theatre in Bombay. But I didn't enjoy the show though the Paramount Publicity Manager had told me that it was a swell picture.

The reason of my not enjoying the picture may have been my preoccupation with my 'kerchief with which I was fanning myself to keep cool. Didn't some one tell me once that the Eros was a lovely theatre and one can enjoy his entertainment there perfectly? Well, that man was a liar. The Eros is evidently a grand theatre to look at but even in its Rs. 1|8|- seats you can't be free from the sweltering heat of the city.

In "Laheri Jeevan", Harischandra and Husna Banu feature together for the first time. It is a Bharat picture release.

MORE HOMELY THAN
"TUKARAM!"

MORE TOUCHING THAN
"DNYANESHWAR"!!

PRABHAT'S

"SANT SAKHU"

Directed by
DAMLE & FATEHLAL

A STIRRING STORY OF A SIMPLE WOMAN WHO ROSE TO SAINT-HOOD THROUGH PURE DEVOTION-

Starring
HANSA — KULKARNI — GOURI

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A **"FAMOUS PICTURES LIMITED"** RELEASE!

There are half-a-dozen pedestal fans, or perhaps more, but they are so lazy and placed in such distant corners that they are of no use to the people sitting in the best centre seats. And when I complained to the management about the heat, I was told that the theatre was not air-conditioned. Imagine that in 1941, and in a theatre with marble steps, uniformed ushers and an ambitious, world-travelled owner.

Well, I still prefer the "Metro" where, at least, you don't sweat as in a stable. What use are the marble steps of the Eros, if within, one has to bathe himself in his own perspiration?

THANKS, NEW THEATRES

Good news comes from Calcutta that the New Theatres have decided to continue their Hindi productions. As an earnest of this decision, they announce the Hindi version of the Modhu Bose production which was originally, perhaps, intended to be produced only in Bengali.

New Theatres who have been always slow in taking notice of press reports, have this time shown commendable speed in announcing their decision about producing Hindi productions. If this speed is going to be the watchword of future activities, we are sure that N. T. will be able to give us some worth while pictures for which the country has been clamouring for a long time.

In the meanwhile, we welcome "Lagan" which though a poor show for Nitin Bose, is still an improvement on the recent flops produced by New Theatres.

DO YOUR BIT, READERS

The Bombay War Publicity Committee, with Bobby Talyarkhan as an important cog in the machinery, has published two delightful little books. "Under Your Tin Hat" Vols. 1 & 2 priced at Rs. 1-8-0 each.

The first book opens with those now immortal words of Mr. Winston Churchill when he spoke to his colleagues in the Parliament, *"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat"* and immediately in the wake of these words we find, *"Come, then let us to the task, to the battle and the toil. There is not a week, nor a day nor an hour to be lost."* Words which should be printed on Alexander Shaw's (Film Advisory Board) pay envelope.

The other volume contains the story of Dunkirk, all told in vivid pictures. Both the volumes are profusely illustrated with some rare war pictures and besides being fully informative, become splendid souvenirs of the present war torn times.

And the small money which you will pay in buying these books, besides returning you its value ten-fold, goes to the aid of the Red Cross. And Red Cross is a greater cause than the present day democracy.

COME ON GIRLS AND BOYS

Once again, there is a scramble among the producers to secure film artistes. Whenever one of them spots a new one—a girl or a boy—they all rush together in an unholy hurry to secure the services of the artiste.

Which all shows that there is a real scarcity of new faces in our film industry. Yes, we do want some new faces. We are all tired of the old ones which now look like white blobs. Some of them have been disfiguring the screen for fifteen years now and waxing, like sunflowers in May, they have become a hideous sight to thousands of film fans.

Which all again means that there is a scope for new talent in the industry. Of course, as usual, we want more girls than boys and it will be really worthwhile for some of our college 'cuties to look towards our film industry for a career. Will they do it? Now is the chance. "Filmindia" will help them to get into the right studios.

In "Kanchan", Leela Chitnis gives this charming Radha Krishna dance with all "those" milk maids.

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• 1941 DEVATA

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THE SINGING SWEETHEART

Our stars are certainly becoming bold and enterprising, the way I find Leela Chitnis working on her own picture, "Kanchan." For months she has been sweating and getting refreshingly slender and teasingly beautiful discussing knotty situations in the story, rehearsing the artistes and herself, singing, dancing and even directing.

This daring woman of the screen is going to give a big push to her producing concern, "Chitra Productions", which she has started in association with the Ranjit Film Co. "Kanchan" may present the old triangle in the traditional story of the Indian village life, but when one of the angles is the glamorous Leela, you can bet that you are going to get a kick out of the show.

As "Zabak", the well-known columnist, rightly calls her the Singing Sweetheart of India, "Kanchan" gives some more scope to Leela Chitnis to put over a few more of her enchantingly beautiful songs on the Indian screen.

Well, we can do nothing better than to wish the sincere artiste all luck with her new enterprise.

SHIVERING BOARD OF CENSORS

Mr. V. N. Pai, the Secretary of the Bombay Board of Film Censors, seems to have swallowed all the criticism about his work and slept over it. We are not surprised at this. This is exactly what Government officers have been doing since they began their business of running a Government. And no wonder, that they have muddled through the whole show.

When we first wrote about the Censor Board in India issuing restricted certificates for pictures which glorify crime, Mr. Pai was quick enough to reply and point out some imaginary statutory difficulties which prevented his Board from doing the right thing. Which all means that while the Board realizes the wisdom of our suggestion and feels the necessity of reform in our censor laws, it is not prepared to rush into it and by doing so take upon itself more work, incidentally, more intelligent work.

In our April issue, we have clearly pointed out the shallowness of the arguments presented by Mr. Pai in justification of his Board's laziness to overhaul the censor regulations and now the only conclusion we can arrive at is that neither Mr. Pai nor his Board wants to do anything about this important reform which is so vital to the future advancement of our social life.

It is clear that the members of the Board have lost their social conscience and do not believe in a progressive life.

ASSASSINS AT LARGE

The communal riots which broke out in Bombay last month have ruined the show business in the City. The first burst was somehow subsided by the local authorities and we had a short interval of peace and good will which helped our cinemas in the city to open their doors wide open.

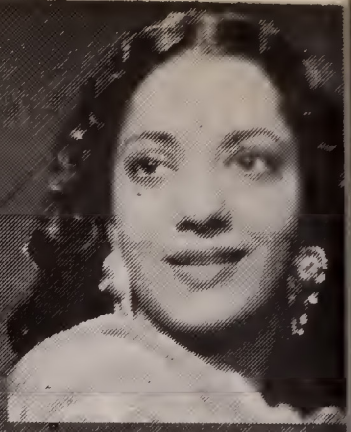
But something went wrong again somewhere and the riots broke out in the city again on the 22nd May, just a day before four new pictures were to be released in the City.

For the first time the four producers took a speedy decision and jointly advertised postponing the releases, with the result that over 50 tins of canned brand new drama is now lying on the shelves unexploited, and their producers are paying the Multani Hundi bankers heavy interest on the stuff they can't cash.

The same stalemate with perhaps more tragic consequences is also seen in other trades and professions in

Jyoti is making "puris" in "Darshan", a Prakash pictur e and who wouldn't like to eat them if one gets the chance.

Leela Chitnis in "KANCHAN"



Vimla Vashishtha in "KANCHAN"

Aroon in "KANCHAN"

Mubarak in "KANCHAN"

a Fortune in "KANCHAN"

(It's four Pictures in One!)

the City. Every one is in a state of panic and human life seems to have suddenly become cheap and worthless, the way it is pulled out of living bodies on the point of the assassin's dagger. The only clumsy part of the whole procedure seems to be that the knife blades get smeared with fresh human blood and have to be often wiped clean with foreign cloth.

Mahatma Gandhi can't yet spin a national yarn to weave it into a patriotic fabric for wiping our native blood.

The police on the other hand, while making all obvious efforts at quelling the riots, make the matters worse by promulgating a curfew between 7-30 p.m. and 6 a.m. during which, barring dogs and the police, no one can move out of their homes.

The ten and half hours curfew is a candid confession of the authorities that they can not manage the show efficiently. So our optimism of looking upto the police for protection becomes a mirage.

In the meanwhile the goondas (professional cutthroats) are having a time of their life in tearing open the half-starved stomachs of sweating Indians who have to go about to earn their day's wages.

With all the leaders of the political opinion, that has the most following in the country today, in jail through the courtesy of the British democracy, armchair rumour-mongers are giving birth to strange and new speculations in tracing the cause of the riots.

Dame Rumour is therefore in her gala array and we are told in whispers that while one community has collected a fund of ten lakhs of rupees to organize the riots, the other community is thinking of retaliating by a collection of twenty five lakhs.

Whatever that be, seeing the method in this midsummer madness one is compelled to conclude that there is some sort of an organization behind all these dastardy murders. And who ever began this dirty inhuman orgy has enough blood on his hands to last him for twenty generations to come.

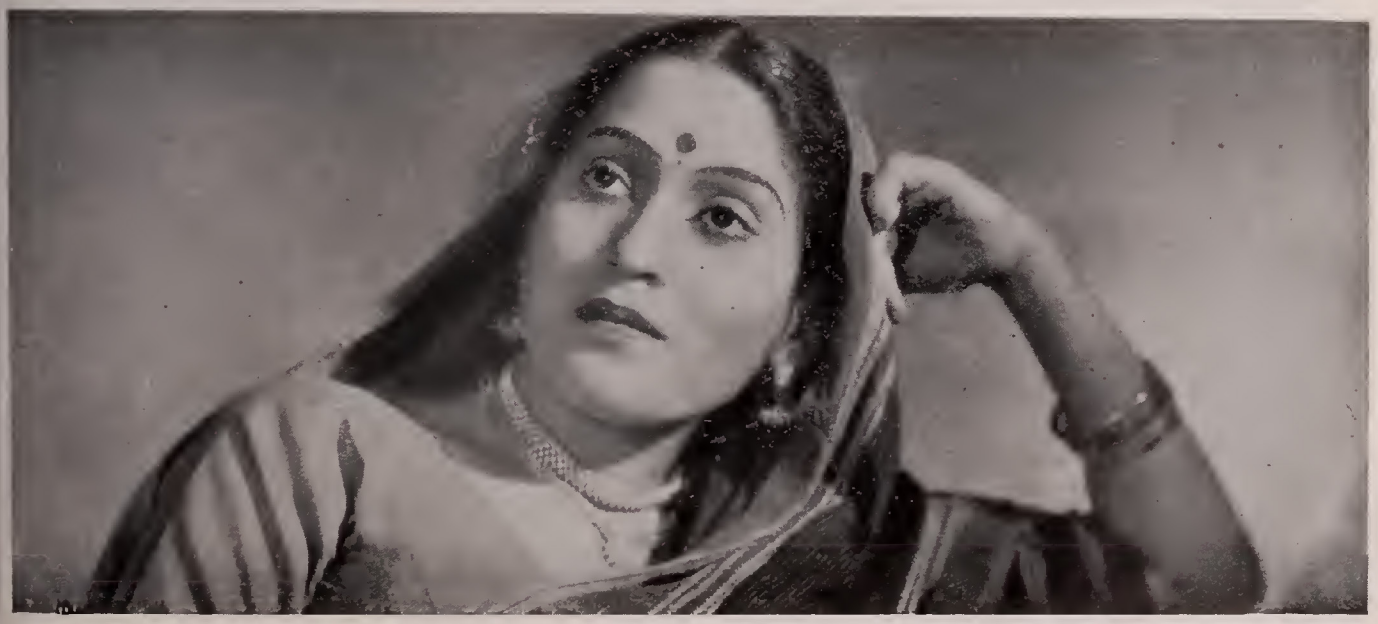
And if, as some well informed persons like Mr. Bobby Talyarkhan think, there are amongst the so-called upper strata of our society rich and educated gangsters who, for political reasons or through communal fanaticism, exploit these goondas and incite them to commit murders it is high time that the self-confessed defenders of democracy should take some drastic action quickly to expose these real criminals behind the dastardly outrages.

Believe it or not, one more ugly rumour persists in the local film industry that a wealthy proprietor of a local cinema, whose communal fanaticism has shown itself several times before, has actually subscribed Rs. 50,000/- to foster communal ill-feelings and propagate the cult of the knife. People in the film industry should, in their own interest, investigate this rumour and if found authentic, it is very easy to teach this cinema owner a lesson of his life-time by unanimously withdrawing support to his cinema.

The film producers, who have lost heavily during these riots, will not require much inducement to unite in boycotting this social criminal who is reported to be misusing his money and status to paint the payments in human blood.

In the meanwhile, the poor and the innocent will continue to die at the hands of the wicked as they have done through ages, unwept and unsung, and those who have fattened themselves on the sweat of the poor shall continue to sing their loyal anthems of democracy.

One wonders whether it is happier to die than to live in these times.



Sumati Gupte has a splendid role to play in "Thoratanchi Kamla" a Famous Arun picture.

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Dated 24th May, 1941.

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Dear Sirs,

I am writing to thank you very much for the lovely evening you gave us on Thursday, your Opening night and also for the lovely Key and Paddock. It was a wonderful show and your SOUND APPARATUS IS FIRST CLASS.

With all good wishes from the Brigadier and myself.

Yours sincerely,
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HUSNA BANU—

She teams with Sardar Akhtar in National's social comedy "ASRA", booked for the Pathe Cinema, Bombay.

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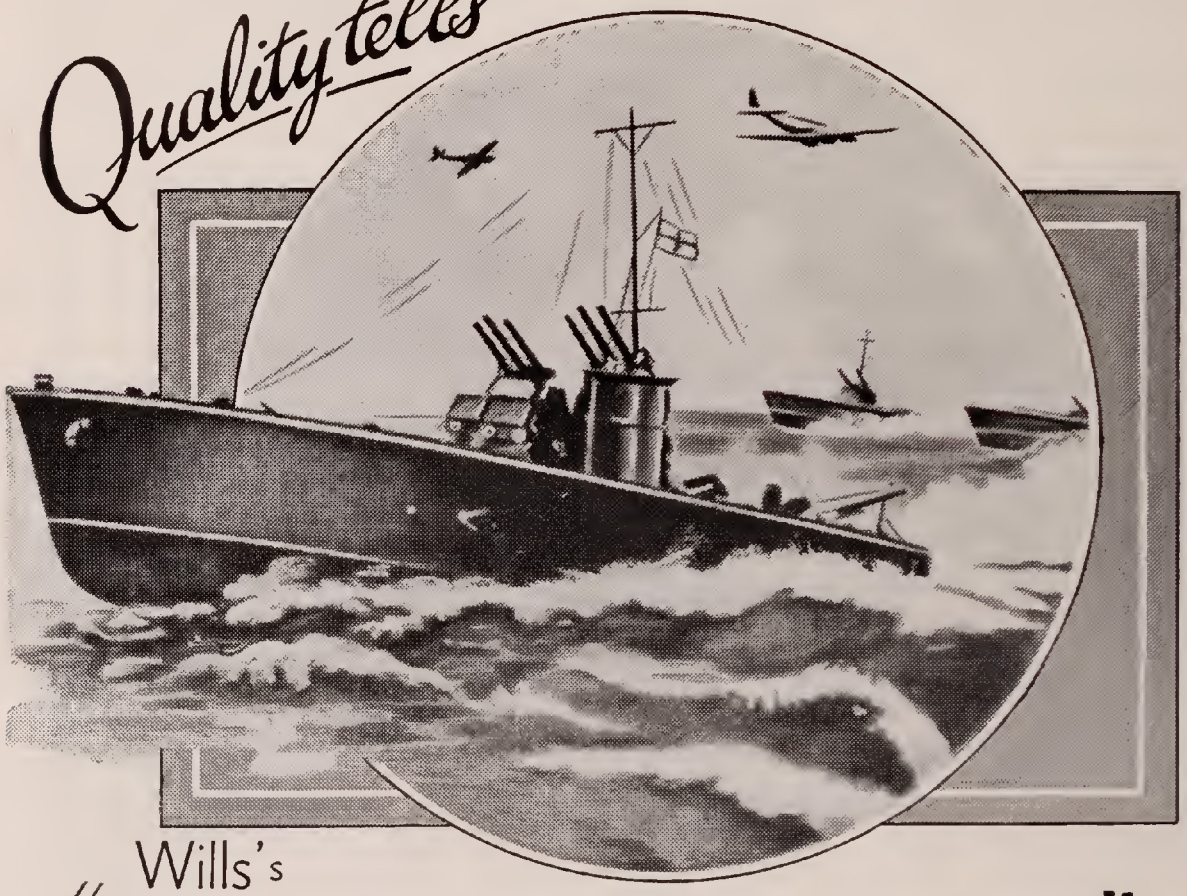

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CAP/173

The EDITOR'S MAIL

[In this section, the editor himself replies to queries from the readers. As thousands of letters are received every month—some anxious and several frivolous—it is neither possible nor convenient to attend to all. Selected letters are usually treated in an informative and humorous strain and no offence is meant to anyone.]

Kanan Devi (Calcutta)

A rumour has spread from some unknown and irresponsible source that I have undertaken a tour programme of dance and song recitals, while I have no plans whatsoever for anything of this sort.

Your letter kills the rumour. But I think, you should go on a dancing tour. You need some exercise to wear off the effects of the slow production programme of New Theatres. In "Lagan" you look more than two eyes can gather.

Miss Kamla (Bulandshahr)

I am very anxious to know whether Naseem Banu is married or not?

Why should you be anxious? Her mother ought to worry or more so the eligibles. Isn't Naseem too sweet to be married?

Can you tell me whether Leela Desai is a better dancer than Sadhona Bose?

I don't think so. According to Modhu Bose and Surendra Desai (Bulbul), Sadhona is not only a better dancer but the best dancer ever born. Let us believe them. She has given them more dances than to any of us.

A. K. Daftwar (Gaya)

Why are New Theatres going backward day by day?

Because they have stopped asking themselves "why".

Why does Leela Chitnis always act on contracts?

Probably, she believes in contracts. One thing good about contracts is their constant novelty and change.

B. Ghosh (Lucknow)

Having read Miss Carlyle's "Confessions" about her boss, I long to read Mr. Patel's opinion about his secretary?

After what Miss Carlyle wrote about me, it seems to be a story of the beauty and the beast. I don't mind, if she doesn't.

Sitaram Khetan (Monghyr)

Where is Snehaprabha Pradhan nowadays?

She is working in the Ranjit studios.

Jaswant Singh (Agra)

Which picture is Kardar directing now?

He is assembling the 'ruins' of "Swamy" in the Circo compound. And then he is expected to join the Ranjit group.

Leeli Daniel (Lucknow)

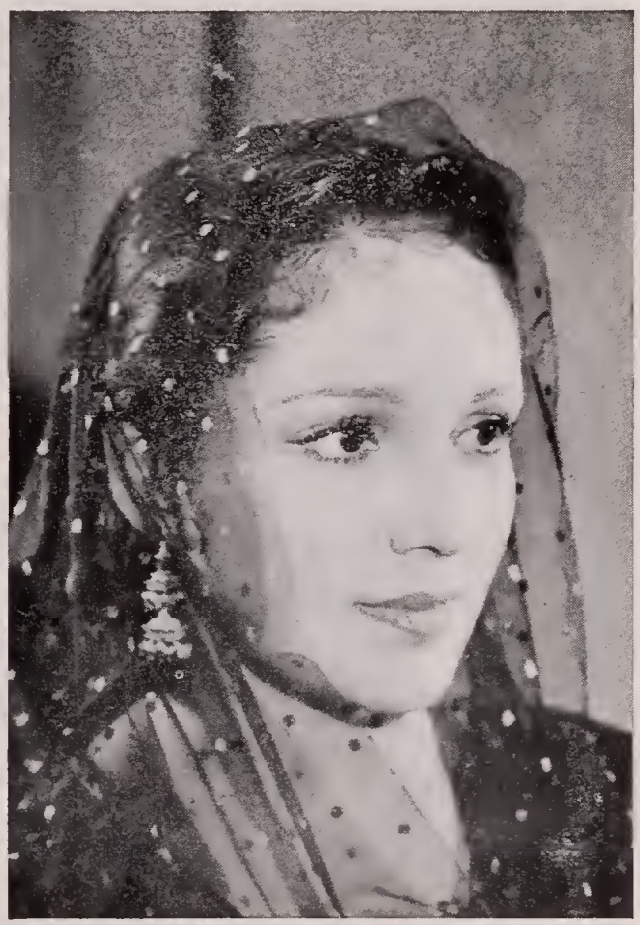
When will Padmadevi, the favourite of Bombay, appear in a Hindi picture again?

She seems to have settled down in Bengal at present. Perhaps she may appear in some Hindi productions coming from the East.

Kotu H. Gursahany (Hyderabad)

How many of our actresses are virgins? Moreover what is a virgin and where to look out for one?

I don't know much about the actresses being virgins. But a virgin is the one who is on the verge and not yet pushed over. This is an antique commodity in a modern world and you may find it in rural surroundings.



The darling returns. Devika Rani will be seen in the next picture of Bombay Talkies, "Anjan." She is not the "innocent" in the picture, it is the other guy Ashok Kumar.

TO LOVE, HONOUR and PROTECT

Look at your bride Mr Bridegroom, so lovely and so loving. She has put her happiness, her security - in fact her whole future - in your hands and you have promised to love, honour and protect her.

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A. S. P. Bhimji (Dar-Es-Salaam)

Do our actresses like sunlight or moonlight?

For work they need studio light, for vanity they like limelight and for their romance they prefer moonlight. Sunlight is too strong for these fickle stars.

Has Wahidan died?

Yes, the winter came and the nightingale was no more.

Bhoopen Hazarika (Gauhati)

May I know why Khursheed has acted in "Musafir" with so many pimples on her face?

Because her director is a short-sighted fellow. Sometimes, he can't see mountains.

B. C. Jain (Bhagalpur)

With which picture Maya Bannerjee began her film career?

"Jagirdar", produced by Sagar Film Company.

Ratan Prakash Rustgi (Chandausi)

Will you kindly recommend a book on writing film stories?

One of the best books, I liked, is written by Frances Marion and is called "How To Write And Sell Film Stories." You might get it from the New Book Co., Fort, Bombay.

H. Ebrahim (Pretoria)

Which is the next picture in which Surendra is appearing?

"Garib", a social story under production at the National Studios.

N. P. Mahajan (Singpur)

Has any woman so far directed a picture independently?

Yes, we had one Jaddan Bai who not only directed but also wrote the stories and the music. But in keeping with her own independence the situations in the picture also went out of hand, and her efforts flopped. Recently, Leela Chitnis tried her hand at it in "Kanchan", but recovered her poise before things were lost and now she has another director working on the picture.

Mrs. Zuleikha Moinuddin (Dacca)

Is Shobhana Samarth in any way related to Director Kumar Sen Samarth?

If marriage is a tie, they are both tied down.

Benoy Kumar Bose (Katihar)

Who is the hero of "Kanchan?"

Arun, who first came on the screen in "The Only Way", a Sagar picture.

I. Vasjack (Durban)

Do you think, Ashok Kumar would like to marry Leela Chitnis?

I don't think so as Ashok has a wife of his own and Leela has a husband and both of them seem to be happy.

How does Leela Chitnis look when she is not in make-up?

It is a close one and so deftly it is being handled by Baburao Pendharkar that Lalita Pawar fancies herself in heaven in "Amrit" a Navayug social picture.

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D. P. R. Reddy (Giddalur)

I have just completed my college course and I am anxious to learn film direction?

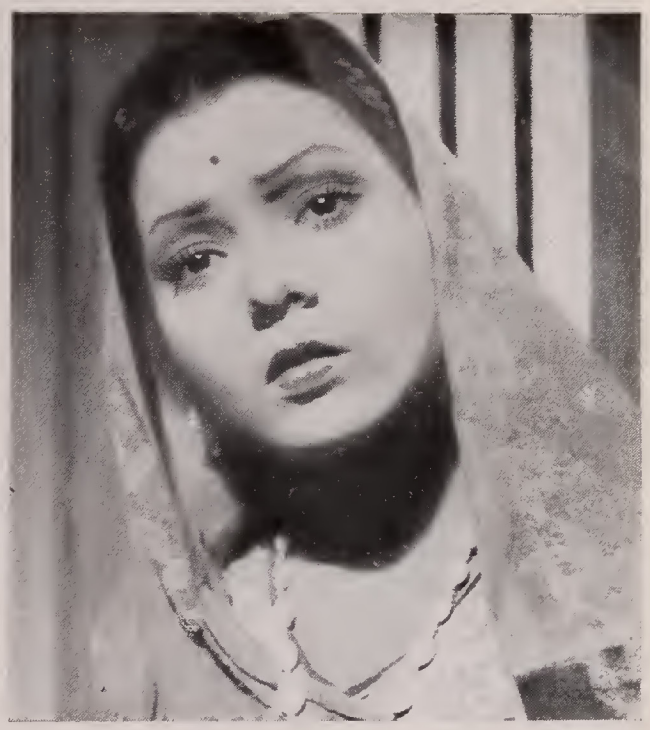
Well, we have no institutions that teach the art of film direction. All our present day directors are self-taught and they have learnt by the method of trial and error. Their theory, they picked by close observation of foreign pictures and their practice, they got either by wasting their own or the producers' money. There has been no methodical training in this profession but one way to get along is to understudy one of the working directors in our film studios. If some one, like Mehboob, agrees to train you, well, then, you will learn.

Chandawarkar Shankerrao (Harwatta)

I hear bad rumours about Director Shantaram. Every man from Poona and Bombay says that Shantaram has done such and such a thing. I am sure that he is not a person to do such a thing. I think that Mr. Shantaram is aware of his fame and he would not have done that thing. So you must tell the public that Shantaram is innocent by publishing his innocence in the next issue.

And I must also publish my innocence about what you are talking. I am sure that Shantaram has not done "such and such a thing" and I am sure, like you, that he has definitely not done "that thing." So, in future, don't believe rumours. Rumours are very often spread by those who would like to do what Shantaram does. Which, of course, doesn't mean that he does "that thing."

Nalini Jayawant, herself a beautiful toy, plays with toys in "Sister", a National picture.



In "Darshan" a Prakash picture Jyoti shines again as a star with a new personality

Rama Prasad Singh (Gaya)

Your propaganda against New Theatres has caused the concern to stop producing Hindi pictures. Do you agree?

I don't. That is a serious accusation you are making and even New Theatres won't accuse me of it. I only want New Theatres to improve and they are slowly improving. And they are not after all stopping Hindi productions, so be at peace.

Leela Chitnis looks younger every day?

She can't help it and so much the worse for us. What is your complaint?

Md. Sajid Ali (Bhagalpur)

Who is Sindhu Gadgil and when will she come on the screen?

She is a young educated Brahmin girl who is bubbling with enthusiasm to join the screen. I don't know when she will actually grace the screen, but she is reported to have joined one of the film companies, recently started. Let us wish her luck.

Please tell me, which is the easiest way to get a job in a film company?

Get hold of the most attractive girl in your town and bring her to a film studio for a job. Your job will be automatically provided for. That is the shortest way. The other way is rather round about.

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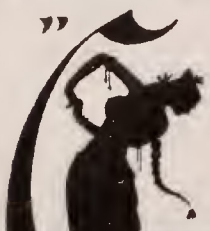

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Miss Muktha Nellikai (Mangalore)

Can you tell me where my favourite star Sabita Devi is at present?

She is my favourite star, too, but I don't get a chance to see her. Whenever, I look out for her I find her "Mummy" in the front door and Director Badami at the back door. How can you see your favourite that way? I think, she has either retired from the screen or is thinking of doing so. She is not much in the news nowadays and I don't even see her photographs anywhere. If she is still to be called a star, this is a peculiar stardom.

I want to write to Leela Chitnis for a photograph.

Write to Mr. C. R. Gvalani, her husband, and seeing your name, he will send you one. His address is Chitra Productions, Main Road, Dadar, Bombay.

Omar Khan (Mysore)

Do you mind printing a photo of Director Mehboob? I want to see his face.

He hasn't much of a face to photograph. His beauty lies in his work. See his new picture "Sister", and you will see the man.

Lokesh C. Dar (Srinagar)

Motilal has come to our city. I had a great regard for him before but I now understand that actors, even good ones, are just glorified bad characters. Motilal is enjoying with all sorts of disreputable people of the city. Are other big ones, the same stuff? I saw him with an overgrown beard. He looked like an idiot. He has made friends with the most hated man of the City. God alone knows what these people must be doing in Bombay?

I, too, know what they do in Bombay. But because I love Motilal, I want him to read this. He must know how he looks in the public eye. If all that you say is true, I shall take Moti to task when he returns. He doesn't lie to me and I shall know the truth. In any case, an educated lad like Moti, good and quiet usually, should not give the world a cock-eyed view of film actors. I do not want him to be a snob, but film artistes are popular idols and they shatter their own glamour when they act funny.

After seeing "Raj Nartaki", I came to the conclusion that the picture was just a complete advertisement of Sadhona Bose. She is spread over the whole picture. Then why was Prithviraj wasting his time?

This is always the case with Sadhona Bose pictures, because Modhu Bose, perhaps, believes that Sadhona has all the drama needed in the world. He may be right as he knows more about her, but Sadhona alone can't be a complete film story. Prithviraj has not only wasted time in "Raj Nartaki" but now he is wasting his life in other pictures. Gone are those old ideals of "Art for Art's Sake." Prithviraj is today like a grocer giving his measure for the price. That is what money does to a man.

Monica Desai looks charming in "Chitralekha" a Film Corporation picture.

Winayak Roy (Mahableshwar)

"Bandhan" and "Naya Sansar" have been big hits and all papers, including "filmindia" have praised the pictures. Glorious tributes have been paid to the writers and the producer. But I find that both the pictures have been directed by one Mr. N. R. Acharya about whom not a line of praise has been written. How is that? Why are the other directors given all the ballyhoo?

A very sensible question, which some one had to ask someday. The system of production in Bombay Talkies is a little different from the other studios. In the Bombay Talkies, the producer takes upon himself the entire responsibility of the picture, the director occupying a nominal post. Mr. Mukherjee the producer practically directs the whole picture. In the other studios the director does everything.

M. P. Sinha (Mymensingh)

Why has Mr. Chimanlal Desai ceased to be the Managing Director of the National Studios? What is he doing now?

The story of the resignaton is a long one. It is as old as Chimanlal and I have no space for it. It is apparent that Mr. Chimanlal's management was not acceptable to the other directors. Men in

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SENSATIONALLY DIFFERENT FROM
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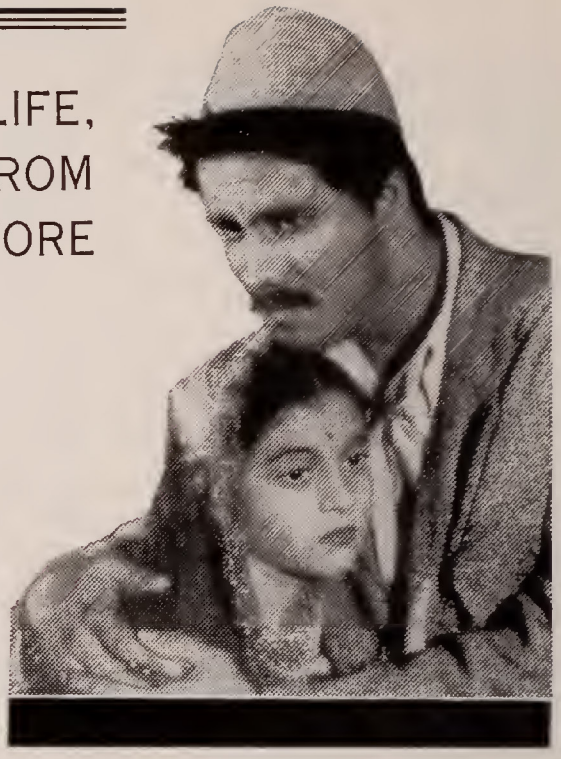

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the know of the affairs are not surprised at Chimanlal going out. Chimanlal Desai has now started a new concern with the significant name of "Amar Productions" and strangely enough the maiden picture is called "The Struggle For Living." These two names ought to show you the direction of Chimanlal's present activities.

Are there any raw film manufacturers in India?

No. But we have directors who expose the film and make it look more raw than ever before.

Kumudini G. Sheth (Indore)

Will you give me Nalini Jaywant's address and tell me something about her?

She is too young to have something to tell about her. She stays at Vidyarthi Bhuvan, Tribhovan Road, Girgaon, Bombay 4, and you may write to her and she will tell you how many dolls she plays with.

M. Pramila (Masulipatam)

What is the exact relationship between Anuradha and Rafiq Guznavi?

Come, I give you the guess.

Hemandra Nath (Agra)

Will Minerva's "Alexander The Great" prove the "Pukar" of 1941 ?

I sincerely wish it does as Sohrab Mody can't afford to fail now. As it is, we have few good companies and we want Minerva to live.

Kawasji F. Kapadia (Deolali)

Who is Kalyani by caste? A Hindu or a Mahomedan?

A Mahomedan.

Shamsundar Vyas (Amraoti)

Don't you think that Vanmala should get out of the industry?

Heavens, why? Don't you like her? She has her good points.

V. Lakshmikanthan (Bellary)

I wish to become a Sound Engineer. Where shall I take a training?

Write to the Abdulla Fazalbhoy Institute, St. Xavier's College, Fort, Bombay.

C. M. Sethi (Lahore)

Whenever I see a romantic picture, its effect lingers with me for five days and I can not prosecute my studies. What shall I do?

Stop seeing pictures. Studies first.

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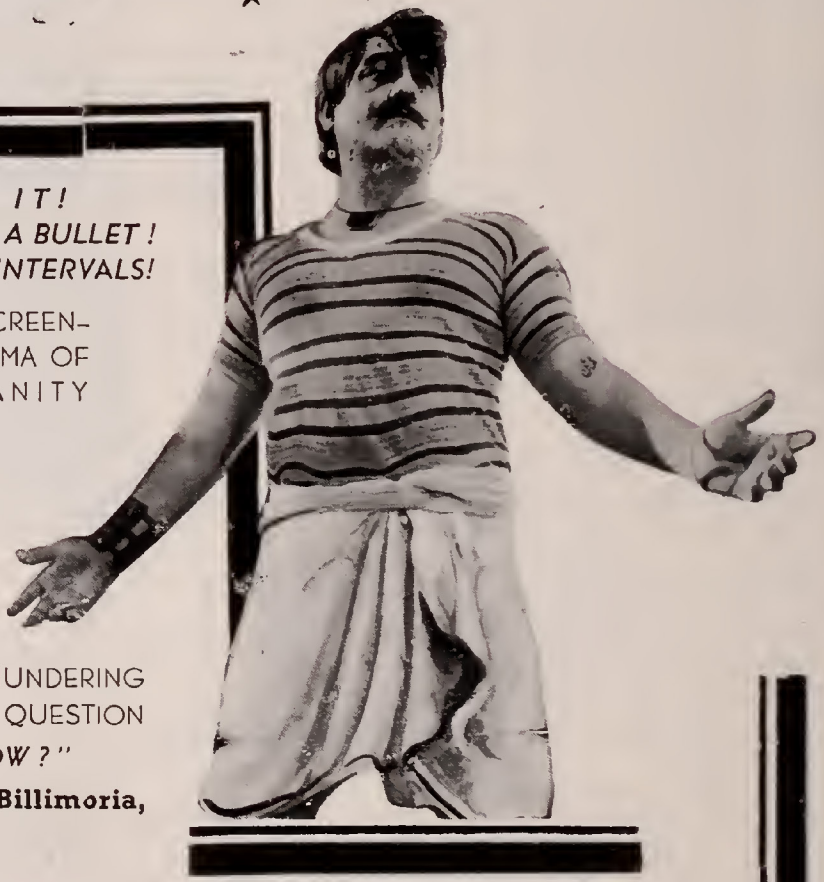
AKELA



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Shri Niwas (Muzaffarnagar)

Why does Snehaprabha Pradhan live in Bombay and Kishore Sahu in Nagpur? Aren't they married?

Yes, they are but this is a modern streamlined marriage and the husband and the wife may be meeting on week-ends. If they are, it is a very sensible arrangement. There is less chance, this way, of one boring the other.

Noor Moonda (Ranawar)

Can India boast of a Boris Karloff?

What is Boris Karloff? He is not a great actor. We have actors with more talent. A hideous make-up doesn't mean acting. Most of our actors can do that sort of a thing very easily.

After "Achhut", when is Miss Gohar likely to be seen on the screen again?

Not till she gets a suitable story. Miss Gohar is in the fortunate position to wait and choose. And just at present, she is waiting and you must also wait.

Om. Prakash Agarwala (Bareilly)

Please let me know the names of Agarwala actors and actresses?

This is the umpteenth time that I am asked a question on communal and sub-communal lines. I don't like it. I have no time for Agarwalas, Andhras, Oriyas, Tamils, Mysoreans or for any provincial, lingual or communal labels. They are all the same to me as long as they are Indians.

K. S. Iyer (Madras)

The entire Tamil world is wild with you, because you have criticized our language. You ought to apologise.

If I have offended any Indian in the South, mind you, not a South Indian, I am always ready to submit my apology. But because I said that the Tamil language has harsh phonetics and some orthodox blokes feel insulted, I am not going to apologise. To hell with such fellows, be they Tamils, Telugus or Bhayyas. My own mother tongue, the Vanjari, is perhaps worse than Tamil and I hate it as much and I don't mind the Tamils or the Bengalis hating it more. It is a rough language of the jungles and deserves to be intensely disliked. I love Hindusthani, like English, tolerate Gujrati and feel drawn towards Bengali.

Many Tamilians, during the last month, have written to me abusive letters, threatening violence sometimes. Which all does not speak much for the Tamil language and its cultural influence on the people who speak it. In the South itself I have noticed a shameful controversy between the Tamil speaking and the Telugu speaking sections. One section seems to hate the other. Which is a really disgraceful state of affairs and certainly not in keeping with cultural traditions of our country. I don't even like the dividing-talk of the South, the North, the East and the West. These are merely geographical divisions of the country and should not be allowed to interfere in our social and cultural contacts. Can't we, even now, after 150 years of shackles, think in terms of one country, one people and one tradition?

Those Tamilians who are threatening me with physical violence are wasting their time.

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OUR REVIEW

'Lagan' Better Picture Than 'Andhi'

Damn Poor Show For Nitin Bose !

Orthodox Story And Boring Picture

Nitin's "Lagan" is certainly a better picture than "Har Jeet" and "Andhi" but it is too poor in comparison with his own "Dushman" and nothing to write home about considering the old standard of New Theatres.

Whatever might have been the state of confusion in the New Theatres Studio, one expected Nitin Bose to give at least a technically superb picture. The fact that he has not been able to do so, after nearly a year on "Lagan", proves the necessity of a radical overhaul in the studio organisation.

ORTHODOX AND INSIPID

The story of "Lagan" is orthodox and insipid and seems to have stepped out of an obsolete story book. It is the story of a music teacher, charitably called a poet, and a disciple, whom we are supposed to take as a young girl inspite of her size and proportions.

The picture opens with some silly slapstick stuff in which Nemo a music school principal is making feverish preparations for the annual social of his school. For a school, teaching only girls, as is shown, the behaviour of the principal and his other staff is too cheap and lighthearted. Nemo also gets a chance for some stupid hysterics when some highly unimpressive parents of the girl-students come and put Nemo on the mat for bad training.

Nemo is soon in despair when (Kusum Kumari) Kanan, easily the most brilliant and favourite student seeing the rest of the crowd of untouchables, comes to his rescue with a gramophone record of an unknown poet.

THE BIRTH OF A POET

The poet (Saigal) is soon searched for and brought to the city. Leaving thousands of other houses in Calcutta severely alone, Saigal just manages to take his quarters a floor below Kanan, of course, without even dreaming that she was to be his student. Call it coincidence or brain wave of the writer but this "accident" gives a chance to Saigal's excitable servant to get into a quarrel with Kanan's father and an opportunity to Saigal to sing a song on the balcony and introduce himself to Kanan. Of course, Kanan, later on, returns the song and within ten minutes we know that all is well with the throats of these two singers.

LAGAN

Producers:	*New Theatres*
Story:	*Benoy Chatterjee*
Scenario: } Photography: }	*Nitin Bose*
Music:	*R. C. Boral*
Songs:	*Arzu*
Audiography:	*Sushil Sarkar*
Art Direction:	*Souren Sen*
Cast:	*Kanan, Saigal, Nawab, Jagdish, Nemo etc.*
Released At:	*Minerva Talkies*
Date of Release:	*10th April* 41

Direction: NITIN BOSE

As there is no necessity nor place in the story for both these songs one is led to believe that the artistes are merely clearing their throats for a greater effort afterwards.

The quarrel between Kanan's father and Saigal's servant is taken to its logical conclusion of a Police Sub-Inspector being called at the door and then finding out that Saigal is Kanan's new music teacher, the Sub-Inspector is sent back about-turn. He, of course, goes without a complaint, and thanks. Otherwise, he would have made a boring story more boring.

Thus begins the love story of Saigal and Kanan between a teacher and disciple. Saigal, selfish, erratic,

Mr. Nitin Bose

eccentric, hot-tempered, jealous and in love—not exactly at first but at second sight—while Kanan, young, talented, already a good singer but learning to be better, liking the teacher but not exactly loving, being too young to think of it perhaps, enthusiastic, suggestively affectionate to mislead a man! Saigal comes out in the balcony and sings while Kanan reaches the stair case landing and bursts out. In both the cases, the audience doesn't miss it.

WHAT A SHOW

Then the much looked forward annual social comes in the shape of a tame show—where Kanan sings a "saddish" song before a microphone and we see Nawab, a newspaper magnate, making eyes of appreciation at her and looking with a kindly fatherly expression, which expression he marvellously maintains even after marrying Kanan.

For one song, Kanan gets a gold medal and we are told—not shown —that the annual "event" is a huge success. The music teacher, I beg your pardon, the poet Saigal goes unrecognized and like a cheap commoner he flies into a rage, vomits out on the girl and goes back to his native village.

In the meanwhile Nawab, the most uncultured looking and unconvincing newspaper magnate—perhaps they have people like that in Bengal—falls in love, we are told, with Kanan and making Nemo, the music-school principal, as a go-between, arranges his wedding with Kanan.

It seems that no one is in love with anyone. Nawab seems to realize the sudden necessity of a companion for his bed, while Kanan seems anxious to obtain a worldly

security in joining up with a man old enough to be her father. Nawab prowls round her with an old tired expression full of sex-craving and even after marriage the director keeps her within safe distance from Nawab—a very wise move.

RETURN OF SAIGAL

Hearing of the marriage "poet" Saigal makes another mad appearance and goes into a new frenzy, but Kanan and Nawab are married, Saigal or no Saigal.

Time passes. The girl doesn't seem to be completely happy. Gratitude to the poet is weighing on her mind. She requests her husband to bring him back and make him great. The husband, like a faithful dog, sets about the work and like a newspaperman teases the poet out of his lair.

Saigal's name soon becomes famous. He swanks and once more with his newly found fame, is rekindled his old passion for Kanan.

Then the drama goes through a few misunderstandings and Saigal tells Nawab that Kanan is in love not with Nawab but with himself. One wonders why love comes in at this stage. Kanan did not marry because she loved Nawab. But love being a handy instrument it is used to do the audience in the eye.

Nawab is soon seen accusing Kanan of disloyalty and sin. Kanan protests and thinks of suicide. She takes a revolver and rushes out to the swanking poet. Some more talk —some more rushes—some tears and some fears and we see Saigal in the hospital, dying after a motor accident and Kanan and Nawab are once again brought together by the dying man.

BUCK UP NITIN

Thus ends Nitin Bose's pretence of a good picture. There are some blind fools in the town who think "Lagan" to be a great picture. Yes, it is certainly great in comparison with "Andhi." But for Nitin Bose, it is a damn poor show. Nitin must not be misguided by the phrases of the publicity pups nor pat himself on the back by reading ready made reviews appearing in the dailies.

We are prepared to lose "Lagan" but losing Nitin will be a tragedy. Nitin must give us a really great picture. It is in him to make one. If New Theatres won't give him the facilities, let him go out and make it but his next one must be even better than "Dushman." In the meanwhile, let him remember that "Lagan" is a setback to his reputation as a great director but let that not dishearten him towards greater effort.

KANAN PLEASES

Coming to "Lagan" its photography is indifferent. Couple of songs are good, but as the music is inclined to be on classic lines it fails to be popular.

Kanan gives a pretty good performance and sings a song well. Saigal does not impress. Nemo is tiresome and so is Jagdish who hasn't much to do. Nawab fails even to amuse.

The story is loosely knit and becomes boring in places. During the last four reels it however, rushes well. But that is all.

As I said before, there is nothing much to crow about, whatever hired pups might say.

Radha Rani in "Manthan" a Wadia picture.

Moti in "Akela" a Great Indian social picture.

MOTILAL—

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WATCH THE

PATHE

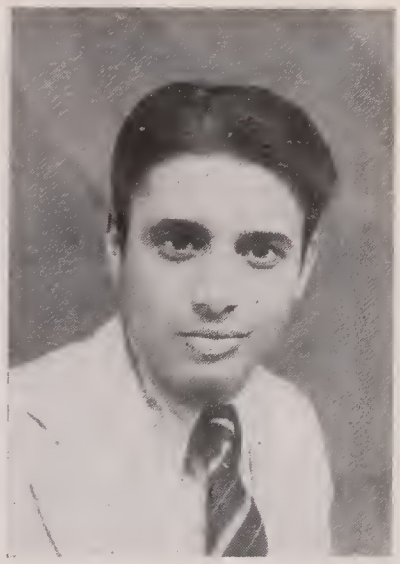
Collegians Cock The Eye At Our Glamour Girls

Even Leela Chitnis Disappoints

Popular Love-Doves Under Sledge-Hammer

By: **Surendra P. Singh, B. A. (Hons.), Patna.**

(Provoked by the article written by Miss Zeenath Zahara, in the issue of November regarding our glamour boys, this writer has made an attempt to give the other side. Incidentally, the other side concerns the other sex. —The Editor).



Mr. Surendra P. Singh, the popular collegian.

Like the College girls we are also human and therefore as emotional. To fill the blanks in our dreams, we need the film heroines just as much as College girls need film heroes but for this we have not to meet together in a shady grove on a Sunday afternoon for a discussion.

We think of our heroines while we walk and try to make our choice by instinct. Men are born dreamers, who dream even while lighting a cigarette in a strong wind.

"Who should be our heroine?" This is what I asked a friend of mine from my College. "One who is the least perfect", he replied, "because the least perfect is easily the loveliest." There is a lot of truth in this but few would admit. And therefore for general consumption I put forth a universal formula. Let us find out who is the most perfect, because, "nearer perfection, nearer our heart" and it is this nearness to our hearts, what, I suppose, should be the criterion of one's choice of his heroine.

If I say that our heroine should have a blush in her face, a melody in her voice, it would seem like chanting an old hymn in a new place of worship. In these days what we really want is that our heroine should understand us and even in a platonic way meet the demands of our sex repression.

Sardar Akhtar seems to do that. Recently she has given definite proofs of her ability to do this but she has come rather late. We had heard of her in our school days and to hear of her again gives us a feeling that we are hearing a twice-told tale. Her freshness—that is now a dream of our imagination—is not there today. Her best performance was given in "Woman" but one who is so admirably suited to be a mother in the picture can hardly be a heroine of the College boys. Can she ?

Leela Chitnis—"can a champion mother be our heroine?" The nation wide success of "Bandhan," ought to answer that.

Kanan—"she displays mischief in every twist and turn". And what a turn it must be with the present Kanan.

Leela Desai—the screen doll—"every time this volatile beauty refrains from opening her lips, she does a service to herself". Does she?

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and

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PRE-EMINENTLY THE
SCREEN EVENT OF THE YEAR

This brings me to Maya. Even the greatest care in "make-up" could not give her the air of a mother in "Bharosa". Maya seems to be a nice girl. She sings well, acts well and seems to understand us too; and she would have been very nearly our heroine but for her appearance in "Pukar" along with Naseem. When a principal star glares at you through the centre of the sky, it is no fault of ours if the star in the corner, though as valuable as the other one, does not catch our eye. In my opinion, Maya should deserve better roles.

NASEEM—SMOOTH LIKE MARBLE

And yet Naseem cannot be our heroine, because she does not seem to understand us. As perfect as a statue, as smooth as marble, with clear but blank eyes beneath dark lashes, with Cupid's own curves to her delicate lips and with numerous little dots and dashes which make a woman irresistibly alluring, she ought to have thrilled us all from one College to another from end to end of India. But she does not. She is a beautiful rosette—a flower without fragrance. I really do not know why this beautiful creation of God should be so. My friends say "conceit", "lack of expression"—and though I have persuaded them to believe that it is not what they say, still I feel that there is something missing somewhere in this beautiful delicacy of the screen.

And strangely enough exactly for opposite reasons we refuse to come under the sway of Devika Rani.

Prabhat has given us two Shantas —Apte and Hublikar. Both are talented, though, we are led to believe, of two different temperaments. There are several amongst us who like Apte but are not inclined to give her the coveted place of "the only one." In a strange way they seem to be entertaining a distant fear for her, perhaps because in her they feel the danger of a rebuff.

On the other hand Shanta Hublikar is too coy and sweet and due to her flawless performance in "Admi", she lingers longer in our memory. We would be all prepared to enshrine her if we were only assured that she would come continuously in triumphs like "Admi."

SARDONIC SABITA

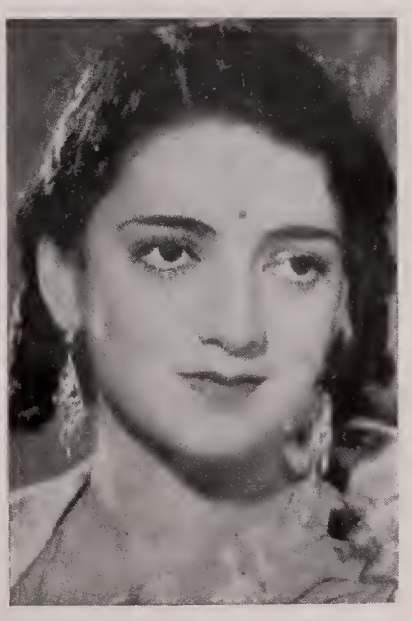
Sabita seems to have everything, except that, one always gets a feeling of something sardonic just behind everything that she does. She is a child I am told, or may be, childish. And she has still not found her true inspiration for work. But we have hardly the patience to put up with her long apprenticeship and it is high time that she starts going as a film star.

Rose is an old story that should begin with, "once upon a time—" She may have been like a rose once, though she has been growing bigger and bigger like a sun flower recently. And who wants increasing dimensions in beautiful women? Not the College boys!

Madhuri and Bibbo—we have heard our elder brothers talk of them and in due respect to our elders, I must confess, that we hardly ever think of prying into their affairs.

Vasanti and Jyoti on the other hand seem to be kids. Many a time I have gone to see Vasanti's pictures with a fond hope of finding her grown out of her frocks but alas, she always plays the Peter Pan and even married people do not like kids all the time. Why blame the bachelors? And Jyoti ! I shall talk of her six months hence. She mustn't know me at present as an immature mind is a dangerous thing not only to itself but to those interested in it. And yet one wonders. Is she really that small? India has a tropi-

Naseem—"she is a beautiful rosette, a flower without fragrance" could such beauty have no fragrance?



Sabita—"there is something sardonic just behind everything she does." But does she do much?

Jamuna—"Her Majesty", with dare and dignity." Has she abdicated now?

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cal climate which encourages quick growth in everything.

Before I travel to Calcutta, I must tell you why Sheela could not be our heroine. She appeared in "Jailor" with an extraordinary grace and looked quite loveable but in subsequent pictures in trying to assume some glamour, probably because Sohrab Modi wanted her to do so, in one single stroke she has lost all that she had gained. It is often through our well wishers that we come to lose something which we have once gained.

MISCHIEVOUS KANAN

In many a heart Kanan reigns supreme. Since "Vidyapati", she seems to have been obsessed with her individualism. She seems to reduce a man into insignificance and if she is left alone to have her own way, ere long, Adam will be threatened with extinction.

Kanan displays mischief in every twist and turn. And a mischievous young man may well be the hero for our College girls but we, the College boys, are creatures of scanty patience. We want something more steady and more loyal.

And yet for this very reason we cannot be driven to Kamlesh Kumari. She is not frivolous like Kanan, I admit, but her austerity holds us in awe. We are dreamers alright but we do not want nightmares.

THE SCREEN DOLL

I remember to have read sometime back that Leela Desai wants real romances like the Hollywood stars. She has my full sympathy, and even a few regrets. One can imagine her plight in a place like Calcutta where people are busy cutting one another's pocket for business. Leela ought to have been here, with us in Patna College, but as she is not, she has to be satisfied by presenting herself as the supreme artiste of Oriental dances.

Every time this volatile beauty refrains from opening her lips, she does a service to herself. Not because her Bengali accent is ill-matched with the Hindusthani language but because whenever she tries to express a feeling through her face alone, she does it more exquisitely than with the help of the spoken word. Her talent can glow only behind her reticence and she cannot be our heroine, for the same reason why a doll cannot be a house wife.

Leela Chitnis in "Kanchan"

Now let us to one who is grace personified—Jamuna. She is "Her Majesty" with dare and dignity and with something of an ethereal emotion and sentiment in her make-up. And this is exactly why, for some of us, she is too good, and for others, too spiritual to be our heroine. We cannot talk to her of the tavern of Omar Khayyam and to talk and talk of temples all the day would make one sick.

AT LAST LEELA CHITNIS, AND YET.

Baffled from everywhere, in the last I tremble to think of Leela Chitnis. "Sant Tulsidas" had run for weeks everywhere. There were people who went to see how the great Sant Tulsidas renounced the world and dedicated himself to the worship of Rama but our College boys went to see the one and only —Leela Chitnis.

"Every pose of hers" said a friend of mine, "is worth a life time." Then she came in "Kangan" and soon her name became a legend, and then she came in "Bandhan" and she soon became a tradition. Every beautiful girl in the College is now a "Chitnis", every smile has the Chitnis spontaneity and every blush wears a Chitnis hue. Her lilting music in celluloid and on wax keeps ringing in our ears morn and eve. And this girl of all should have been our heroine but alas Baburao Patel, Editor of "filmindia" says in his January issue: "Leela has enough children to be many. Leela is our champion mother among our film stars." And with these words the famous critic shatters our dream and writes the saddest epitaph on our romance. A mother! Can a champion mother be a heroine to the dreamy youth? And who wants a mother for our heroine—certainly not the College boys? The place in our heart therefore goes vacant crying for a candidate.

FATHER v/s SON DAUGHTER

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EVERY GENERATION.....

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But their love withered.....

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Tweedledum In Filmdom

Film, A Vital Interpretation Of Life
Will Our Directors Read This?

By: **Cyril Modak, M.A.**

Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum are two very gifted birds. In this case Tweedle-dee had gone to Europe to gather some first-hand information about the German Mad Hatter's plans. So Tweedle-dum was obliged to allow me to substitute for Tweedle-dee because one of Tweedle-dum's frenzies of criticism was upon him and he had to have a companion. I record the dialogue as Tweedle-dum wants a copy to show Tweedle-dee on her return—being as fond of showing off in front of his wife as most husbands are!

T: Have you seen any Indian films recently?

I: Yes, some. Are you interested in films too?

T: Absurd question; Is the Cinema not a modern invention which affects everybody for good or ill? Of course, like any intelligent creature, I'm interested in everything that affects our lives.

I: The songs and dances in Indian films are delightful....

T: Humph! So you go to the Cinema to hear songs and see dances? What's the purpose of a film?

I: You are always thorough enough to raise fundamental issues. I fancy, the purpose of a film is to entertain and incidentally—and only incidentally educate.

T: You are exasperating! Your formal answers merely dodge the issue. 'Entertain' and 'educate'—two words that have been given perverted meanings since Oscar Wilde and the Decadents. The purpose of a film is a very unique one. It is being degraded in India as in the West. A film should be created because a dynamic interpretation of some vignette of life demands expression—it may be in the heart of a story-writer or scenario-writer or producer or actor, or man in the street.

LIFE CRITICIZES ITSELF

I: Just a minute. So you think the purpose of a film is to furnish an interpretation of life?

T: A vital interpretation of life with all its humour and pathos, foibles and mishaps, prejudices and aspirations, its opposition and struggle, defeat and triumph.

I: Would such an interpretation involve some criticism or would it be reproduction?

T: Oh! how tiresome dull people are! Life vitally interpreted on the screen criticizes itself, evaluates its own success and failure, grandeur and meanness, beauty and ugliness, and reveals its own destiny. A film that does this is a work of art.

I: Most Indian films would fall very short of....

T: Most films, Indian or not, are works not of art but industry. They must become works of art if the Cinema is to be a worthy social institution deserving to be perpetuated.

I: Excuse me, but according to you every film should mirror the defects of society and point to reform, and....

T: Only if that society has nothing but defects. The real social environment of life should be interpreted—its strength and its weakness, its healthy and its unhealthy spots.

I: No artistic license should be used to omit what is inharmonious and....

Mr. Cyril Modak, author and photo-playwright, gives our film directors some useful pointers in this article.

T: At present especially in India what you call 'artistic license' is used so freely in the production of films that much of reality itself is omitted. I often wonder when I go to the Cinema here if I am awake or if I am dreaming.

I: But the filmic setting given to a story has to be artificial.

T: How you love to twist things! (One of the effects of the educational system, I suppose!) The filmic setting for a story should be a reproduction of the actual social and natural environment of the lives interpreted. It should be alive with reality. Only then will the characters seem real. The dream-like effect of most Indian films is due chiefly to the unrealistic rendering of a story-plot.

KILLING TIME WITH MUSIC

I: Are the beautiful songs and dances part of the unreal that you would omit?

T: Absurd! Is life bereft of music and dance? I would insist, however, that the songs flow spontaneously from the depths of the story and the dances emerge naturally from apt occasions. When music and dance are brought in artificially—and they are in 90%

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Mythological Musical Comedy

Directed by:
Dadasaheb Torney

Dialogues & Songs by: **S. A. Shukla**

Music by:
Sadashiv Nevrekar

Starring: **Dinkar Kamanna, Kusum Deshpande, Kamla Barodekar, Vedpathak, Danve and Sushila.**

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of our films!—they are meant to cover up deficiencies in the film. Their function is more or less the same as that of a clown: to kill time. This is hardly worthy of Art.

I: Good heavens! Would you rule out all these pretty devices? Life needs them to get over bad moments.

T: Let all your pretty devices be used as they are in life, but don't use them to make a mummy pass for a living being. Artificial settings, artificial crises, artificial renderings must always make the characters artificial and their acting meaningless. Tragedy becomes melodrama. Comedy becomes burlesque. Effective acting, impressive character portrayal need the inspiration of life, real pulsating life. Every breath of artificiality chokes this inspiration. You can see it on the faces of many actors and actresses. Facial expressions can only grow out of emotional vitality. Mummies or robots have no emotional life!

I: You would make allowance for imaginative renderings of certain themes? Satirical stories, for example.

Put him anywhere and he will come out and be heard. They tried to put Charlie down in Ranjit, but now he is at last directing his own picture.

T: Certainly. Imaginative renderings are based on actual situations. They may, as they develop, pass beyond a mere correspondence with facts, but they are not artificial because they are interpretative of Fact. Give us more satires ....good ones!

I: Stories must be written realistically if films are to be realistic.

T: You are right. Stories must be inspired if they are to inspire actors, directors, producers and picture-goers! A realist is one who is inspired to gaze steadfastly at facts and master them. Realism, if we begin to find it on the screen will give men and women a new outlook and give India the vision that it needs today. If the Cinema doesn't do this for the country it is missing a tremendous opportunity.

DECORATING LIFE IS UNNATURAL

I: But surely a film-director can improve on a story-writer. A film can transform a commonplace story into something grand and glorious. I don't quite agree that the story itself is all-important.

T: If a film-director is a greater artist than a story-writer he can assuredly improve on the material of a given story. You are thinking of hack story-writers who write to order. A filmic rendering of their stories will often be better than the story itself, but it will seldom be a source of inspiration.

I: Then only great stories should be filmed?

T: You are trying awfully hard to trap me but its no use! What do you mean by 'great stories'?

I: Stories of great authors.

T: You've fallen into your own trap, my friend! No. Any story—no matter whether the fickle ways of men grant its

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author oblivion or fame—any story is fit to be filmed *provided* it is in itself artistic, provided it is in itself authentic as all works of art must be, provided it carries the royal endorsement of Life.

I: If that is done we'll not have more than half-a-dozen new films a year.

T: Is India so barren of life? Is India so destitute of writers who can observe, woo, understand and reveal the life around them? Every man and woman you meet has an authentic life-story to tell—struggle and frustration, hopes and joys, romance and adventure, passion and pain. Read the unwritten annals of their lives with an artist's eye. Listen to the unuttered music of their hearts. Look into their eyes. Put into words their wordless stories. And let these stories be filmed.

I: Yes....There will be no need then vainly to try and decorate life.

T: Life decorated as it is in so many of our films looks as unnatural as a wealthy but uncultured woman with all her bulky ornaments.

I: And the bulky ornaments often hamper movement.

T: Very true. Life expresses itself in action. Vigorous life demands vigorous movements for its portrayal. In many of our films the characters seem to be languid convalescents ordered by their doctors not to exert themselves very much! Certainly the proverbial East is not so slow-moving as the snail-crawl movement in our films.

LIFE FRIGHTENS THEM

I: Why is that so?

T: Chiefly because neither the story-writer nor the director dares to capture reality. There is no desire to present real living scenes because we all seem to be afraid of life. Languorous movement is perhaps a sort of opiate to the onlookers. It is for me. Languorousness is mistaken for grace because illusion is accepted as truth.

I: Of course, there are dull moments in actual situations when men just sit and wait.

T: Yes, but real men and women move fairly rapidly from scene to scene, through hate and love, under jealousy and revenge, surmounting obstacles, meeting crises, ever advancing towards a goal.

I: It depends largely on the development of a plot.

T: When a plot is conceived realistically and when it unfolds dynamically as it might in actual life it will allow better opportunities for quick movement and vigorous acting. But when a plot is like a peg on which to hang some villainy, songs and dances, and a few pretty women and infatuated men indulging in repartee.... how can you expect action and movement?

I: Your contrast is slightly exaggerated, but it's sharp and telling.

T: Perhaps it is exaggerated and yet the despotic contempt for

The hammer strikes when the temper breaks out in "Sister", a National picture with Sheikh Mukhtar in the lead.

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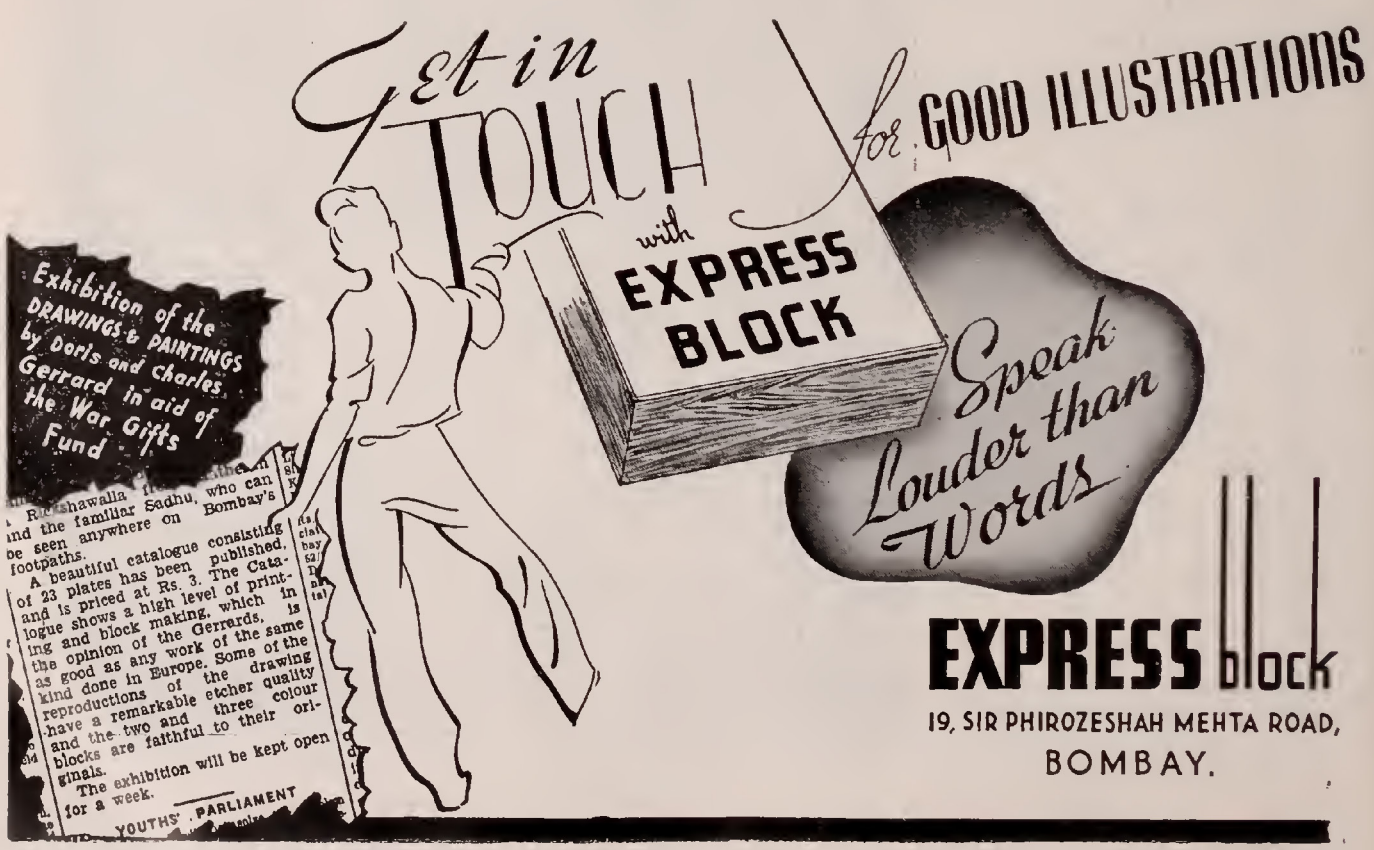


all laws of logic and psychology manifest in the development of plots is rather appalling. A *Sadhu* or beggar will suddenly drop from nowhere and save the situation. A man senseless with liquor will within fifteen minutes sit up thoroughly clear of all the effects of intoxication. Brothers and sisters often wax more romantic than the lovers themselves. A good man without any stages of transition will suddenly find himself allowing a harlot to make him drunk. You can easily recollect such 'accidents' from films you have seen.

I: Surely, life is greater than psychology and logic of our pre-historic university courses either!

T: Psychology, in its practical aspect, gives us hints of how human beings react to their environment. It gives a fairly reliable clue to the understanding of human nature. Logic furnishes a method to get order out of chaos. In life you find a great deal of method, emerging patterns of cause and effect, progress through a chaotic clash of opposites. The unpsychological and the illogical are almost always bound to be untrue to life.

RESPECT HUMAN VALUES

I: Psychology and logic are only aids to a proper interpretation of events.

T: But by disregarding these aids our films frequently interpret events as Alice found them in Wonderland!

I: You are judging Indian films from a Western point of view. Our temperament is different. Our audiences have other preferences.

T: I abhor this vile trick of the politician to throw a racial bias over an argument. I am not a Westerner. You have studied abroad and lived in America as long as I have. I am looking at Indian films from a human point of view. Your temperament is different, and, thank heavens! Indian preferences are not the same as Western ones. But human nature is the same everywhere. And the film cannot afford to neglect the laws of human nature without running into magnetic mines—and coming to grief.

I: Have Indian films no good features?

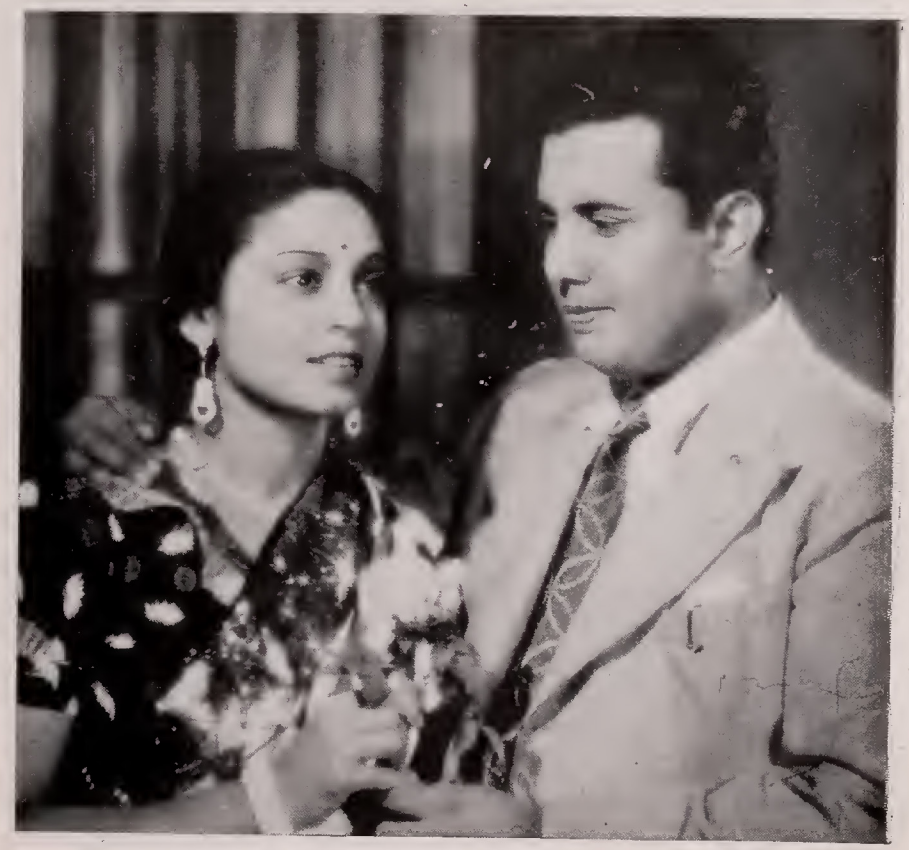
T: You poor darling! Of course, they do. I have not referred to them because with the vast sources of untapped material and talent in India, with the immense possibilities for improvement, and with the inarticulate yet growing demand for first-rate filmic Art the good features must not be kept from attaining to their best. The good is the foe of the best.

I: When our films become more to your taste, what will our audiences get out of them?

T: They will get what men and women all over the world want deep down in their hearts, and may sometimes not be aware of it. They will get the one thing that Art alone can give. They will get INSPIRATION. They will be inspired with new insight, rapture or remorse and a passion for greater, truer, fuller life.

I: O Tweedle-dum, if you could spend two days with every Film-Director in the country, we would begin to see the New India in this generation.

T: After the first hour the impatient directors would politely set their Chesire cats after me!....But now I must go.... flap-flap!



Vinayak and Meenaxi make love an excuse to be affectionate in "Amrit" a Navayug picture.

GERALDINE FITZGERALD–

After her brilliant debut in "Dark Victory," this Warner star will soon be seen in another called "Flight From Destiny".

Englishman On The Mat!

"Goodbye To Indian Films"—A Rejoinder

He Confused A Trailer With The Feature

By: **T. N. Mahadevan.**

(Though it is rather late in the day to give a rejoinder to John Alexander, still the writer, in his criticism of the critic, has argued many a point interestingly.—The Editor).

I read with much interest the article under the caption, "Goodbye to Indian Films" by John Alexander, the Englishman, which appeared in the January issue of "filmindia." I appreciate very much the spirit in which it was written. Mr. John Alexander says in his article that he spent about a year in India seeing various Indian films. However, after going through the article very carefully one is not much impressed with its intrinsic value. I am of the opinion, and, I am sure, many a film critic will share my views, that, although J. A. has pointed out a few faults in the Indian films in general, and the Cinema Houses in particular, he has neither exhaustively dealt with them nor shown the way to remedy them. And he has not discussed either, the various underlying causes which contribute to make the Indian film industry the partial failure, which he suggests it is.

In short, what J. A. has said about the Indian film industry amounts to very little compared to what he has left unsaid, which is evidently through a lack of knowledge of the various aspects of the industry; his sporadic visits to a few pictures, (mostly Western ones), and his frivolous treatment of an important problem like the one under discussion, vouch for that. In any case, the article itself appears to have been made up of a few parting hints, thrown at random prior to a hasty embarkation, mostly on such inconsequential subjects as arm-chair comforts (or, rather, discomforts, I should say) and orchestra accommodation, film fans and fancy costumes, Tom Mix serials and tiresome trailers and audience interest and attractive film heroines.

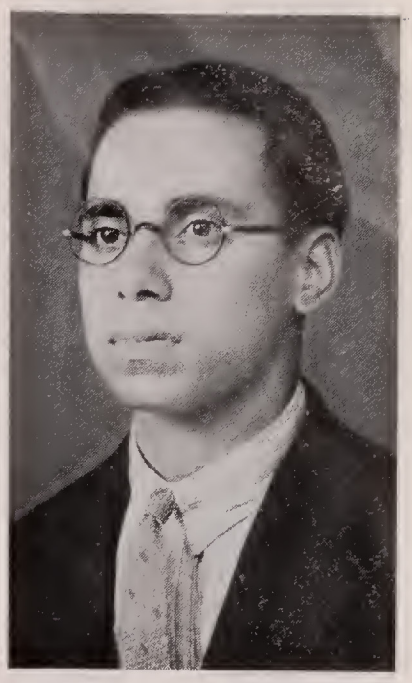
None of these points serves any useful purpose, not in any case, for the improvement of Indian film technique. What they do serve, however, is to provide food for thought for some of those capitalists, who never let go an opportunity by, without exploiting the poverty-stricken masses of India, by building a few more cinema houses of the magnificence and splendour of the "Metro" in Bombay.

ART AND POLITICS

Although I do not like to mix up or confuse politics with Art, I have no doubt that, under the present Imperialistic regime, they are so intimately correlated, so inseparably intermingled that one cannot be visualized without the other. I can quote a hundred and one instances where Art in any form whatsoever, is never allowed to make a headway due to the myriad obstacles put in the way of its advancement. Unfortunately one cannot be too careful these days with one's pen, lest the long arm of the law stretches its grim tentacles to grab the unwary victim.

How, then does our friend, J. A. expect Indian cinema houses to provide arm-chair comforts and alabaster flooring? How can these luxurious facilities be provided for the fans who pay the ridiculously low sums of 4 and 8 annas for a seat, especially when the Indian capitalist has to pay highly prohibitive duties on raw films and the various other adjuncts such as machinery etc. which have, of a necessity, to be imported?

I should now like to deal, seriatim, with the points which struck me most as having received an unfair treatment in the hands of Mr. John Alexander.



Mr. T. N. Mahadevan

WESTERN CULTURE

In opening his volley of criticisms, J. A. starts with blowing his own trumpet, or rather blowing his National trumpet. He says: "I had been a Flash Gordon fan; to find one of his films in this exotic Oriental centre struck me as a worthy achievement for Western Culture!"

One would very much like to be enlightened as to how a Flash Gordon serial shown in a Rajkot cinema proves the achievement of Western Culture!

J. A. goes on to say, "the cinema was in a narrow street, like all the streets in Rajkot, and I found great difficulty in manoeuvring my car anywhere near the entrance." Did J. A. expect to find a stately Marine Drive leading to the Rajkot Cinema for his car to manoeuvre?

He then describes the opulence of British pictures, and complains about the poor lighting in the Rajkot cinema auditorium. Well, what more could he expect in a Rajkot cinema hall? Did he expect invisible lights and incandescent lamps, hidden wires and hundred kilo-watt bulbs? Did he, though? He could as well have complained about the

Mr. G. H. Veeranna, proprietor of Gubbi Theatrical Co., Bangalore.

scarcity of water in the Sahara! And his remark, "Only in Bombay have I found a standard of comfort approximating to the European!" Great Jesus! If J. A. were to find every cinema house in India "approximating in comfort" as he says, to the Western standard, where would his poor rich Imperialistic regime be?

SCHOOLBOY ALEX

Imagine a Film-critic like J. A. "trembling with anxiety" when the cave dwellers were advancing on the disarmed Flash. (What a pity the Rajkot exhibitor cut off the film at the psychological moment and kept Schoolboy Alex on tenterhooks!) I should think that Westerners who dare criticise Indian film technique must be past the stage of Mauser shots and menacing gestures, hair-breadth escapes and hang-dog countenances and the multifarious other stunts of thrill and suspense. By his own admission J. A. is a Flash Gordon fan, and one cannot imagine him "trembling with anxiety" at the Rajkot cinema house, where he must have seen Flash in a fix for the umpteenth time!

When do they have intervals in British cinemas? In the beginning? In the end? Or, after one reel? And what do they do during the interval, if any? Carry on a clandestine mooning interlude?

I do not know how many trailers are shown during the run of a film in Western countries, but I do know that many of the cinemas in India which are showing exclusively Western pictures show more than one trailer, and announce the arrival of many more, weeks ahead. Then why criticise Indian films in this respect?

MEMORY SHARPENERS

Films in any Indian language are essentially meant for Indians to understand and follow. J. A. has only himself to thank if he confused a trailer with the feature. Surely none of the other spectators would have been confused on this point. Supposing J. A. were witnessing a German, Russian, Japanese or Chinese film would he have been able to follow those pictures any better than an Indian one? Then why blame the inclusion of trailers during the interval of a film for ignorance in language? And if a trailer accidentally got mixed up with a feature on a particular occasion, there is no necessity to make such a big mountain of the small mole.

Again, if one is as stupid as to lose contact or continuity of a film

Mr. K. V. Acharya, proprietor of Balaji Films, Bangalore.

Miss Jayamma plays the title role in "Subhadra."

merely because trailers and other advertisements are shown in the interval, one had better not see any pictures at all! And J. A. talks of the exhibitor underrating the intelligence of the audience in that the former includes a trailer during the interval. How about J. A. himself doing it by suggesting we are all incapable of retaining the trend of the story on account of the distraction of seeing other films in the interval! And he says even advertisements take one's attention away! My friend, J. A. must be a veritable Menelaus, indeed, to have such a poor memory. And to judge all Indians by his own standard! Gee, it takes one's breath away.

His veiled insinuation and parenthetic gibe when he talks of the Indian "audience interest", in general, and during the Coimbatore show of "The American Tropic Film" in particular, are disgusting in the extreme to the Nationalistic spirit of the Indian.

ROTTEN EGGS AND TOMATOES

One does, to a certain extent, agree with J. A. when he deplores the noise created in a cinema house by the lower-class fans, but what better behaviour could he expect from the uneducated masses of

India. And whose fault, may I ask, is it that India's masses remain backward in the matter of education? I desist from giving full vent to my thoughts here for obvious reasons.

Talking of hooliganism in Indian cinema houses, one would very much like to know the state of affairs in their Western counterparts? I do not boast of a personal knowledge of these matters in so far as they concern Western cinema houses when an accidental cut-off is experienced (or doesn't such a thing happen there at all?), but we all have either seen in the Western films themselves which are exhibited in India, or have read accounts of how, when a bad theatrical performance is witnessed, rotten eggs and effervescing tomatoes used as missiles by the so-called cultured Westerners, find their way, with lightning rapidity, to the targets on the stage, followed by owl-hoots and cat-calls. Well, if this is not hooliganism, what is?

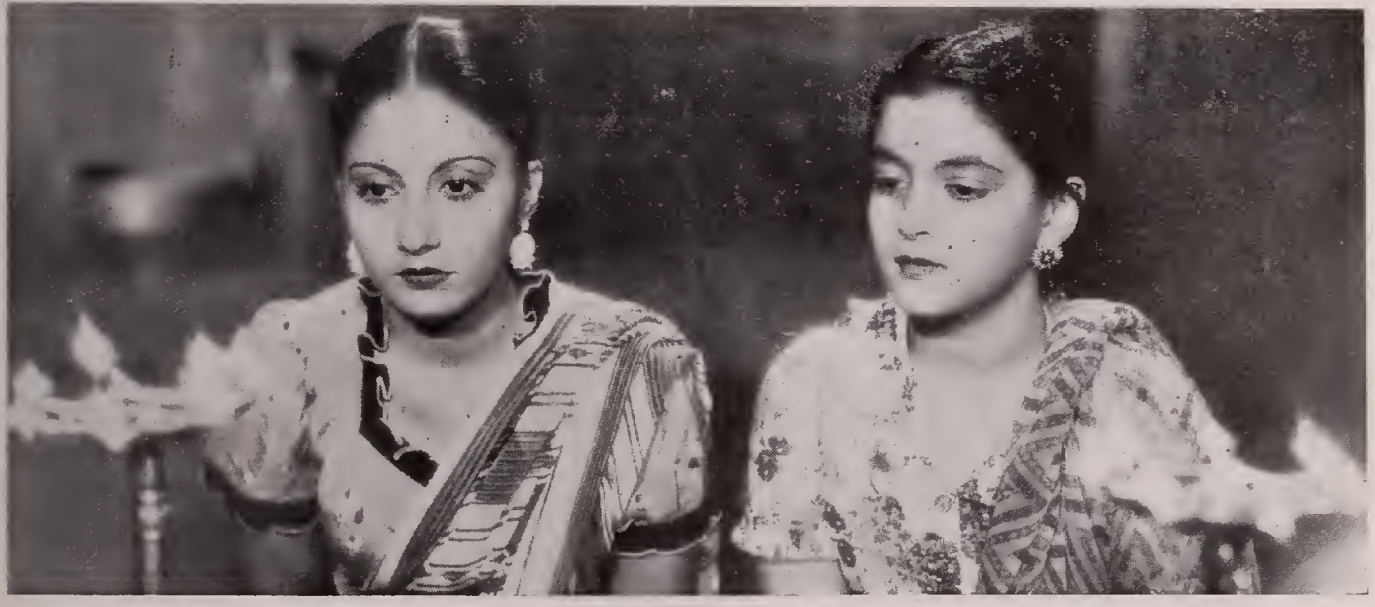
"COOLIES' FILM" INDEED

Every sane thinking person, Oriental or Occidental, will admit that to ignore social themes, or to "skate over them in a half-hearted way" as J. A. puts it, is short-sighted. But to doubt, on that account, the purely idealistic Indian Mythological, National and Cultural films as "coolies' films" is nothing but sheer impertinence on J. A's. part. It will take decades, nay, centuries for J. A. to understand the spiritual outlook of the Indian, and although the few Westernised upstarts avoid Indian films, it is not because, they are against Indian Nationalistic themes, but that Indian films lack the so-called technique that Western films naturally possess. This is the view expressed by one school, while there is another school which also, to a certain extent, avoids Indian films. Their attraction to Western films, however, is definitely due to the glamour girls who shamelessly exhibit part of their body by which the sensualist element in the youth of every country is carried away, and which satisfy their innate passions.

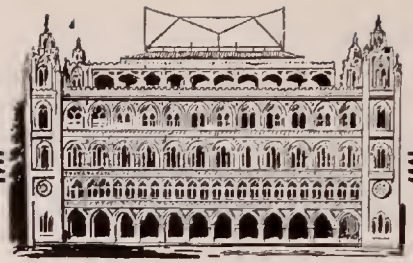
Yes, it is certainly the "Oomph" and the "It" girls who draw the big crowds in cinema houses which show Western films, and even the intelligentsia dare not deny such a glaring fact. Fortunately or unfortunately, and in spite of the mild compliment bestowed by J. A. on the "attractions of Indian film heroines", we singularly lack glamour girls. But such public as patronise Indian films (and they are not a small number, seeing the huge box-office crowds that films like "Admi" etc. drew week after week) care two hoots for glamour girls. Their ideals are higher than mere outward show. The Indian public likes the music (and who does not?), although there are a few too many pieces in certain pictures. It admires the beauty of language more than the beauty of female form; its plane of thought is spiritual while that of the Westerner is mundane.

By the way, talking of songs in Indian films, one feels that the Directors are neither scrupulous about the number included in a film nor are they judicious in their distribution. But the public desires it and the Directors have to satisfy the public. Take the songs out of the Indian films, and what have we? A mere skeleton. Similarly, take the glamour girls out of Western pictures, and they will not be worth the celluloid on which they are produced!

But, surely, J. A. ought to have known, in spite of his language difficulty, that some of the Indian pictures are good and above the average. And, if they are not better, or the technique not up to the standard of Western films, he ought to look for the causes at his own door. Let him—or, more correctly, let the Imperial Government—relax the various restrictions imposed upon the Indian Film Industry, and Presto! What an admirable product will we not have, to show to the critical eye of the Westerner? Granting that these major obstacles are removed, the minor ones, such as characterisation, costumes, settings, etc. will pale into insignificance.



That burning flame throws a shadow of grief on Husna Banu and Nalini in "Sister", a National picture.



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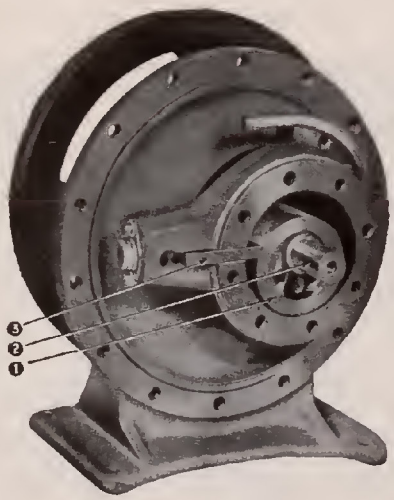

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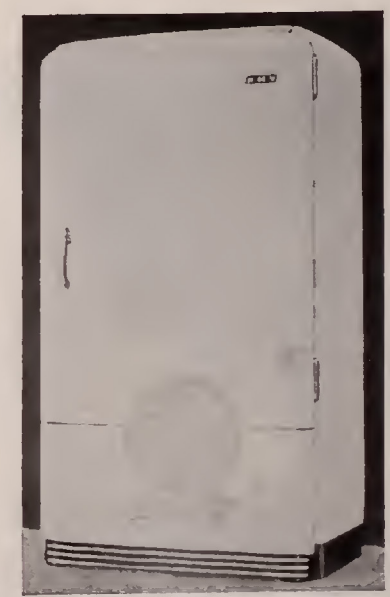

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Mazhar, The Tough Man With A Soft Heart

He Has Worked In 108 Pictures

By.....ZABAK

Yes, Mazhar Khan is an old campaigner, whom both sound and time have not dulled one bit. In fact his connection with the screen dates back to 1927, when he ran away from failure to follow the dictates of his own heart. But, if he has found success to-day it is by dint of sheer perseverance and his ultimate doggedness not to admit defeat.

When Mazhar Khan came to Bombay seeking an opening in a studio, the cinema industry was in its infancy and the men who had charge of its rearing were not very bright specimen of intellect with the result that Mazhar Khan had to knock from one studio gate to another without so much as seeing the big *seths*, who behind the hefty lathi of pathan watchmen ruled the destiny of our industry in a manner to suit their own peculiar temperaments and whims.

It was the late Mr. B. P. Misra who first recognised in the young fugitive a potential box-office attraction. He gave him his chance. And within a week Mazhar Khan was placed before the camera for a role in "Fatal Garland", a costume phantasy.

This was the beginning of a glorious career. Mazhar Khan never looked back after that. Other pictures followed in rapid succession, and within a year the unknown man who had tramped from studio to studio, became a celebrity of the first ranking and for a long time the most discussed man in films.

IMAGINE—108 PICTURES

In spite of the fact that he featured in over 108 pictures and has reached the highest rungs of the ladder, Mazhar Khan feels that he has not as yet given a performance of which he can really be proud. In fact, if one were to speak to him on his brilliant characterisations, he would smilingly brush them all aside and change the topic.

Shamim comes to screen in Charlie's first picture.

Like most U.P. men Mazhar has a sentimental streak a yard wide. Unlike most U.P. guys, he does his best to conceal it. He is shy and just can't "warm" up to people unless he has known them a long time. Probably this is due to the fact that he has had a police training, but take it how one may the fact remains that the Mazhar of the screen is quite different to the Mazhar you see without make-up.

Perhaps this was why Shantaram, the perfectionist, selected him from among a host of first class stars to play the role of "Thakur" in "Padosi."

The role was difficult. It required a lot of attention and a thorough understanding of human psychology ....but Mazhar Khan, nothing daunted, threw himself into the role and once again emerged with flying colours....he had added another triumph to his long list of screen characterisations.

"Thakur" was great. "Thakur" was superb. "Thakur" is imperishable....but Mazhar Khan is capable of still greater things and I have a notion that he will give us yet another brilliant and histrionic portrayal in "Akela", in which he has been cast as the tough blacksmith with a heart of butter.

In "Akela" a Great India picture, Mazhar Khan gives a sparkling performance.

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★ Pictures In Making

BOMBAY TALKIES

"Naya Sansar" which has proved such a stupendous hit is now being released in the North where expectations have run high about its box-office success. Rai Bahadur Chunilal will be touring the North this month presumably to supervise the several releases of this picture.

At the studios, Devika Rani is busy with a new social picture which has been called "Anjan" in which the great star features with Ashok Kumar. This picture is expected to be completed by the middle of July.

FAMOUS ARUN FILM CO. (Poona)

"Thoratanchi Kamla" a historical production has been completely finished and is now awaiting release in Bombay. Those who had the good fortune of seeing its exclusive trials say that this picture is going to be a real good hit. In the meanwhile they are shooting, in Poona, a costume picture called "Taj Mahal."

NATIONAL STUDIOS

The release of "Asra", a social comedy has been postponed owing to the communal riots in the city.

At the studios, with the departure of Mr. Chimanlal Desai, Director Mehboob has become the Production Chief, with the result that feverish activity is evident in all the departments. After doing a long-due pruning in the over-staffed personnel of the company, Director Mehboob has settled down to an ambitious programme of production. New pictures are going on the sets almost every fortnight and we find that Director Thakur who has just completed "Kasoti" has begun a new social picture called "Garib." The cast of this picture is led by Veena Kumari and Bhudo Advani, the comedian, while Messrs. Chimankant Gandhi and Lalitchandra Mehta, that junior bracket of directors, have taken in hand another social which through sheer modesty they have not yet named.

Director Virendra Desai is of course completing his "Nirdosh" in Hindi and Marathi as slowly and carefully as is his usual wont.

And yet perhaps the most ambitious picture that has gone on the sets is "Roti" under the direction of Mr. Mehboob and with Chandra Mohan and Sheikh Mukhtar in the lead. That celebrated artiste Chandra Mohan, who will be working for the first time with Director Mehboob, and in a picture that vindicates hunger to wake up the social conscience of our society, is expected to give a thrilling performance as usual.

PRABHAT FILM CO. (Poona)

Quite a lot of work has been done on the socio-mythological picture "Sant Sakhu" by its directors Messrs. Damle and Fatehlal. This picture is expected to be on the screen sometime in the month of July and no pains are being spared to make it a successful box-office attraction.

Director Shantaram is enjoying a well-earned rest before he goes into production.

On the 1st of June the Prabhat Film Co. celebrated their 12th anniversary in the midst of their staff and a crowd of distinguished guests and we hope that this occasion was used by the chief executives of the company to promote goodwill and mutual faith.

PANCHOLI PRODUCTIONS (Lahore)

"Khazanchi" is making new records for this company all over the country and riot or no riot, it is pulling a tremendous crowd in the city of Bombay.

At the studios in Lahore they have almost completed "Chowdhary" a social picture while preparations are afoot for two more pictures, "Khandan" and "Meena Bazar."

It is reported that the services of K. L. Saigal and Shanta Apte have been secured for these pictures.

RANJIT MOVIETONE

This studio is a Bee-hive with several pictures under production at the same time. All the three

They are not stuffed tigers. They are the real stuff, but they seem to be nervous at the sight of the other "tigress." The other one is Moti (the names of the other two are not known to us), in a scene from "Circus Queen" a Paramount picture. Kikubhai Desai, the producer is safe outside.

The village well—the Fleet Street of an Indian housewife—where news is brought, sifted and censored. Kumari in "Devata" a social picture of Vauhini in Telugu.

huge sound stages are busy day and night and one after another pictures come out from this studio. One that will be released almost immediately is called "Shadi" which features Madhuri and Motilal. It is a social picture directed by Mr. Jayant Desai and great things are expected from it.

Director Chaturbhuj Doshi has completed "Susral" a social story while Director Charlie, the famous comedian, is giving the final touches to his own picture and still does not know how to christen it. We suggest that it should be called "Charlie's No. 1."

PRAKASH PICTURES

"Darshan" a social story directed by Mr. C. M. Luhar is described as a masterly production from every angle by the studio. They expect this to turn out a top rank picture and we have not the least doubt that Jyoti, who leads a very versatile cast of players, will put life into the picture.

Director Vijay Bhatt has started shooting "Bharat Milap", a mythological story featuring Durga Khote, Shahu Modak and Sobhana Samarth.

GREAT INDIA PICTURES

"Akela" a social story starring Mazhar Khan has been completed and now awaits release. This picture is reported to be having a heart-rending story and the studio promises it to make it a major success of 1941. Quite intelligent publicity is being done for this picture which we are sure will help it to attain a terrific box-office success.

PARAMOUNT FILM CO.

Producer Kikubhai Desai himself has managed to complete at last his costume fantasy called "Sheik-Chilli." The picture which is supposed to be a very fast thriller will come to the screen sometime in the month of June. Another one which is on the sets now is unique in its selection of subjects, being perhaps the first circus picture of India. It is called "Circus Queen", with Moti and Jal Merchant in the lead and

Sheik Mukhtar, screen's tallest guy, gives a versatile performance in "Sister," a National picture directed by Mehboob.

some tigers and lions in addition. Director Balwant Bhatt is in charge of not only the players but also the tigers and other wild beasts. We only hope that the other unusual artistes do not make a short meal of the director.

NAVYUG CHITRAPAT (Poona)

"Amrit" a social story, starring Baburao Pendharkar, Meenaxi, Vinayak and Lalita Pawar, has been released at the Minerva Talkies in Poona where it is drawing huge crowds which appreciate this excellent picture given by Director Vinayak. It could not be released in Bombay due to the riots but no sooner the riots are over, the picture will take its place on the screen.

Other pictures that are likely to go into production immediately are called "Pundalik" and "Sangam."

ATRE PICTURES

Whoever has seen the maiden picture of this company comes telling us that "Charano-ki-Dasi" has become an excellent picture. We can bank on the fact that it must be having an excellent story because Mr. Atre has written it and perhaps it is well directed being in the hands of Gajanan Jagirdar. But let us all wait till the picture is on the screen which is expected to be sometime in the month of July.

While Mehtab takes the rose bath in "Chitralekha" Ram Dulari reads the love message.

There is more breakage within him than what you see in this home. Sheik Mukhtar gives a heartrending portrayal of an all-absorbing brotherly love in "Sister", a National picture.

SELECT SERIAL SUPPLY

"Chitra-Lekha", that successful costume picture of Film Corporation of India, will not be released at the Lamington Talkies owing to the riots. If half of what Mr. Lim Billimoria, its distributor, says is true, "Chitra-Lekha" ought to be a marvellous successor to the triumph of "Qaidi."

BRILLIANT PICTURES

Believing that everything old is dying out, these producers have launched almost a revolutionary social subject in taking up "Municipality" which is perhaps the best satire on the present day democratic local self-Government. The story is written by the eminent Marathi humourist Madhavrao Joshi and its production seems to be safe in the hands of Mr. K. Narain Kale who

Kumari and Nagiah make a superb team in "Devata" a Vauhini picture in Telugu.

was till recently associated with the Prabhat Film Co. They are already in the interior sets and we expect the picture to be completed during the next three months.

WADIA MOVIETONE

"Manthan" should have been on the screen had it not been for the communal riots in the city. It was due to be released at the Imperial cinema in Bombay but now, like other pictures, it has to wait till the city *Goondas* give their permission for releasing the picture.

At the studios Director Homi Wadia is taking the final sequences of "Bombaiwali" featuring Nadia and John Cavas.

CHITRA PRODUCTIONS

With Leela Chitnis in the singing and dancing mood, "Kanchan" promises to be one of the best social pictures ever produced in the country. Whatever its intrinsic merits one cannot help but look askance at Zabak, the man who has been entrusted with the picture publicity, when he starts talking tall and loud about it. Whatever the fact may be, "Kanchan" is going to draw well seeing that Leela is going into it after her triumph in "Bandhan."

BALAJI & GUBBI FILMS (Bangalore)

"Subhadra", a mythological picture featuring Jayamma and Honnappabhagavathar with G. H. Veerana, is being fast completed at the Saraswati studios in Poona. Director Pulliah promises to make it a first-class box-office hit and if he gets half the facilities that he expects in the Poona studios, we are sure he will keep this promise.

VAUHINI PICTURES (Madras)

Their third social picture "Devata" in Telugu has been completed. With Nagiah. Kumari. Suryakumari and others in the cast and with Director Reddy, Cameraman Ramnath and Art Director Sekar doing the technical work, it is expected that this picture will secure the same high admiration which their previous one, "Sumangali" earned. The picture has the traditional Indian theme in which angelic forgiveness of a wronged Hindu woman is glorified. By the time this appears in print, many in the South will have the rare pleasure of seeing the picture on the screen.

MODERN THEATRES (Salem)

The production of "Manonmani" in Tamil has been stuck up owing to a little court case between T. R. Rajakumari and the Madras United Artists' Corporation. But another picture called "Maya Jyothi" featuring Master Mahalingam and T. S. Rajalakshmi has been almost completed.

Nadia and John Cavas meet again to thrill thousands in "Bombaiwalli" a Wadia thriller.

OUR REVIEW

"Choodamani," Vulgar & Indecent Picture

Censors Stumble In Their Duty

Clumsy Hotch-Potch Of Many Blends

Here is one of those fantastic Indian pictures which break every cannon of art, written and unwritten, and which, in spite of the jumble of ill-assorted effects, get the public's nod as, "highly entertaining." How the censors certified it in its present state and how the public can find entertainment in it will remain two of the major mysteries in the South Indian film annals.

"Choodamani" is claimed to be a "social" picture, but it is in fact a clumsy hotch potch of many blends —social, romantic, farcical, satirical, obscene, stunt and even mythological. In a patently absurd story of an impossible man and a loyal wife, with a seduced-and-deserted girl, a spurned lover and a licentious hypocrite playing supplementary parts, an unholy crowd of incidents are packed in, to make, perhaps, the crudest screen story.

Experienced direction however saves it from positive repulsion and the free-and-easy acting of the cast and the speed of movement give the picture a certain tempo and entertainment.

CHOODAMANI

Producers: *Sree Janki Pictures*
Language: *Telugu*
Photography: *Mama Shinde*
Recording: *Ramchandran*
Music: *Venkatraman*
Cast: *Pushpavalli, Satyavati, C. S. R. Anjaneyulu, etc.*

Directed by:—

P. K. RAJA SANDOW

ONE SILLY THING AFTER ANOTHER

The "hero" of the story is Madhusudan, an Oxford graduate and a business magnate of Madras. The heroine is Choodamani, a beautiful, village orphan, who is ill-treated by her shrewish aunt while her henpecked uncle, in whose house-hold she is brought up, looks helplessly on.

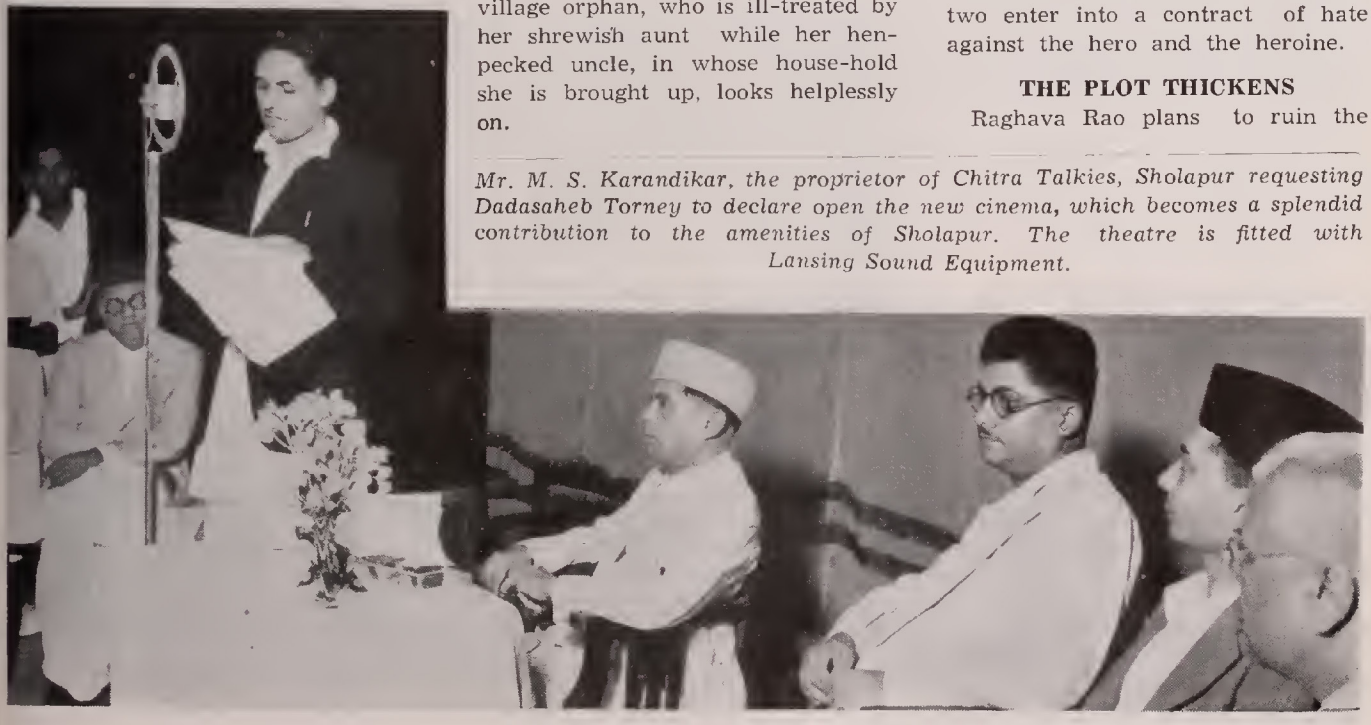
The "villain" number one is Raghava Rao, a rich, amorous relative of Choodamani who offers to marry her but is spurned. Villain number two is Sankara Sastry, a licentious high priest of a "mutt" and the brother of the "hero." The bad woman is Madhuri, a sweet-sour girl whom the "hero" has seduced and cast aside. The clown of the piece, whose "episodes" have absolutely no bearing on the main plot, is Girisan who leaves home and wife for Western culture and comes to start a hair cutting saloon.

These are the main characters whose harum-scarum activities result in one silly thing after another to create alleged drama and emotion.

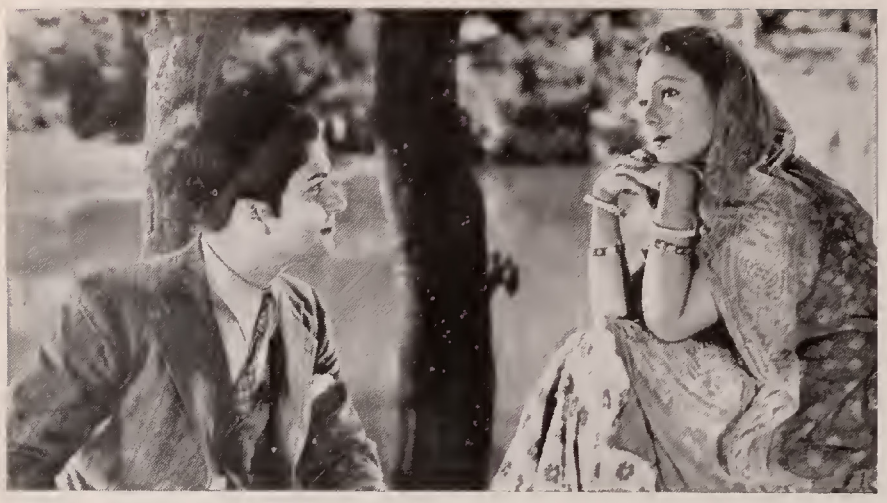
The hero, who, for no particular reason, casts aside the girl whom he has seduced, weds, for no particular reason, the heroine to whom this is a great relief. The couple are very happy in Madras but Madhuri, the seduced girl and Raghava Rao, the spurned lover of Choodamani, are far from happy. Madhuri strangles the child, born of her illegitimate liaison with the hero and throws it into a garbage can (a very morbid act) when Raghava Rao, who has come to Madras with the express purpose of doing the maximum harm to Choodamani and her husband, catches her in the act. The two enter into a contract of hate against the hero and the heroine.

THE PLOT THICKENS

Raghava Rao plans to ruin the



Mr. M. S. Karandikar, the proprietor of Chitra Talkies, Sholapur requesting Dadasaheb Torney to declare open the new cinema, which becomes a splendid contribution to the amenities of Sholapur. The theatre is fitted with Lansing Sound Equipment.



Prem Adib and Jyoti make a romantic team in "Darshan", a Prakash picture.

hero who, as a result, soon faces bankruptcy. His wife seeks the aid of the hero's brother, the high priest. That hypocrite, who is busy dividing his time between devotion and debauchery, straightway proceeds to hoist Choodamani into his bed but is beaten to death by his own cook.

The hero, who, for no specific reason, has been suspecting his wife's loyalty, now flies into a rage and dashes to death their tiny child and leaves home. Then the "Before-Christ" miracle happens and an ascetic restores the child to the mother.

And now we have some fights and return fights in which all the villains are destroyed and the hero and the heroine live happily ever after as intended before.

GOOD ACTORS ALL

Everyone acts freely, as if actually engaged in doing the absurd things assigned to them. However, with the exception of Pushpavalli, who plays the title role, polish is entirely lacking in all the performances. C. S. R. Anjaneyulu, who plays the hero, and Sivarao who plays Girisan, the Brahmin, who sets up a barber shop, dominate the picture.

Director Raja Sandow has put in, not merely his "touches", but his "punches" as well. Wherever amorous advances are made, the "All-In" style of wrestling technique seemed to have been used. There is experience behind the direction, but little else. Photography, and recording are just average. Dialogues are pretty well-done, though lacking brilliance. Songs are just tolerable.

UNFIT FOR THE POST

This review would remain incomplete if strong objection is not taken to the gross and the indecent in the picture. Observe the following scenes: Madhuri's soliloquy before killing her illegitimate child; her heaping the refuse in a garbage can over her strangled child; a nude statue, in close-up, with vulgar and suggestive action, while the hero grabs the heroine on the other side; in a nuptial chamber, a tray of bananas is emphasised and the husband makes a gross gesture with a banana at the bride; then elsewhere the hero is shown actually dashing the child to death.

The censor who passed these scenes, as fit for public exhibition, is in our opinion, unfit for the post. Total ignorance of the social code of censorship or an amazing lack of decency must be put to the censor's credit.

The picture, whatever its success at the box-office, is a bad record for Director Raja Sandow (who had once made a good picture like "Thiruneelakandar") while, the Madras Board of Film Censors can not be forgiven for allowing a shabby picture like this to be shown on the screen. What is the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce doing?

"Come, come, my pet," says Motilal to Madhuri in "Sasural", a Ranjit social, but the pet seems to be having other ideas.

OUR REVIEW

"Clerk's Daughter" Becomes A Popular Film

Presents Orthodox And Reactionary Conclusions

A Romance of Laughter And Tears

Here is one of those simple, simply told pictures which inspite of very mediocre technique and average direction, appeal to a large number of people though not spectacularly so.

The drama in this story, however, is trenchant, morbid and tragic and in its conclusions it is rather reactionary seeing that a rich snob does not even repent till a poor life is sacrificed and thereafter he suddenly becomes a soul of generosity. The picture has a two-piece story the first one ending with the suicide of Sita and the second one beginning with the episode of Sarasa.

In a pathetic tale like this, there can hardly be any comic sequences and yet the comedy relief, strangely clean and wholesome, has been cleverly woven into the story to make it look incidental.

A WELL-KNOWN STORY

The story is quite familiar to the Tamils, having been serialised in a popular Tamil weekly and performed as a highly popular stage-play by T. K. S. Brothers, the joint producers of the film. It vividly portrays the agonising lot of a poor but self-respecting Brahmin, with daughters to marry, a large family to support and utterly inadequate means to do so—a lot still wreaking untold havoc in many a home in South India.

On the 19th May, they remembered Himansu Rai again and garlanded this statue at the Bombay Talkies' Studios. And who can forget him?

CLERK'S DAUGHTER

Producers:	*T. K. S. Brothers and Murthi Films*
Language:	*Tamil*
Scenario:	*B. N. Rao and K. V. S. Vas*
Dialogues:	*T. K. Muthuswami*
Photography:	*Rustom M. Irani*
Audiography:	*K. P. S. Mani*
Music:	*Narayanan & Padmanabhan Party*
Cast:	*M. V. Rajamma, T. S. Rajalakshmi, Droupadi.*
Released At:	*Wellington Talkies, Madras*
Date of Release:	*10th May* '41

Director:—B. N. RAO

Such a man is Ramaswamy Iyer of Kailasapuram. He earns ten rupees a month as a clerk to Mani, the wealthy Mirasdar of the place. He has a wife, two daughters and two sons to support. Sita, his eldest daughter is the belle of the village and of marriageable age. But as no proper bridegroom can be found due to her poor circumstances, the parents are greatly worried as gossip gets into its stride.

Ramu is a rich youth of high ideals, but he is averse to marriage. His mother, a widow, is eager to get him married with Sita to whom she has taken a great fancy. The parents of the girl give their willing assent, and Sita is often invited to Ramu's house to get him interested in her. But he remains frigid and instead offers money to help her get married.

This is indignantly refused, with the result that, while Ramu and his

On the heights of Olympus. This little sister of Sheik Mukhtar climbs high in "Sister" a National picture.

A moment from "Sasural", a Ranjit social, when the foothold is a bit unsteady, Motilal helps Madhuri here, with the same ease with which he takes her to the C.C.I. swimming pool.

mother are away on a pilgrimage, poor Sita, who has really lost her heart to Ramu, is given away in marriage, in order to stop scandal and gossip, to an age-old widower, as his third wife. Just after the wedding, the old bridegroom stumbles and dies.

Misfortune never comes alone. Mani, employer of the clerk, covets the widowed Sita and sacks her father who expresses his indignance at the indecent proposals. Disease, poverty and grief bring about his merciful death.

Ramu, returning from the pilgrimage, is shocked at the course of events and seeks to help Sita's family but is refused. Mani, the Mirasdar, continues his immoral advances and Ramu happens to notice this once. Afraid of Ramu misconstruing the situation, Sita writes to him a long letter confessing her love for him and beseeching him to look after her family, she commits suicide.

The deeply penitent Ramu tries to get Sita's sister Sarasa married into high society. At the last moment something goes wrong and the bridegroom's party walks away. Everyone is flabbergasted, but Ramu gallantly saves the situation by taking the bridegroom's place himself.

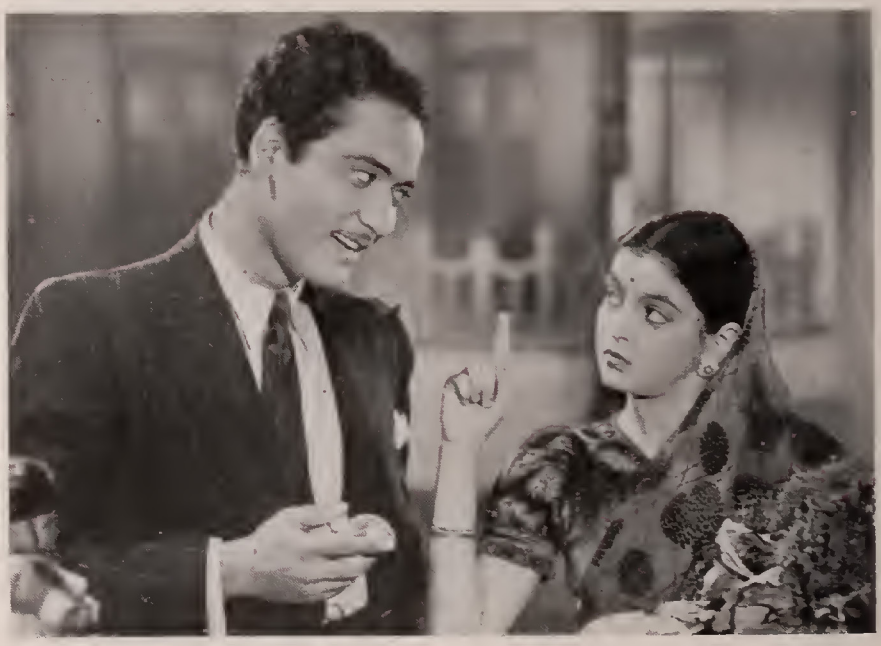
FINE PERFORMANCE

While all the characters do competently, one of the finest portrayals ever given is by P. Subbiah Pillai as the poverty-ridden and ruggedly simple clerk. M. V. Rajamma is good as Sita while Drowpadi as Sarasa is sparkling. T. Sitalakshmi gives a finished performance as Ramu's mother. K. Ramaswami as the old widower is also excellent.

A more careful script and a more imaginative direction would have lifted the film to the higher realms of art. It is the brilliance of the dialogues that makes up in part for these defects.

The photography is average and at places positively poor. The recording is satisfactory while musical direction is only tolerable. But the music is given only in correct spots and that is something new in Tamil films.

"Clerk's Daughter" is a picture that will appeal to orthodox family audiences, though the reactionary element will prove amusing to the progressive minded.



"Not so fast" warns Nalini Jaywant in "Sister", a National picture, but Harish seems to be bent on mischief.

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